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*THE*  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
JOHN SKELTON.

*WITH A MEMOIR.*

VOL. I.

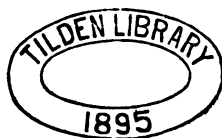


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### ADVERTISEMENT.

The Poems of Skelton are here reprinted from the excellent edition prepared by the Rev. Alexander Dyce. The various readings of the text have in general been omitted, the space which they occupy being out of proportion to the advantage derived from them by most readers. The latest improvements made by Mr. Dyce have received proper attention. A very small number of his notes have been abridged, or dropped as superfluous ; about as many have been added, or enlarged, and a few have been altered, — it is hoped, for the better.

The American editor is responsible, wholly or in part, for those annotations which are marked with an asterisk.

CAMBRIDGE, July, 1855.





## P R E F A C E .

---

THE very incomplete and inaccurate volume of 1736, and the reprint of it in Chalmers's *English Poets*,<sup>1</sup> 1810, have hitherto been the only editions of Skelton accessible to the general reader.

In 1814, the Quarterly Reviewer,—after censuring Chalmers for having merely reprinted the volume of 1736, with all its errors, and without

<sup>1</sup> "Mr. A. Chalmers," says Haslewood, "has since given place [*sic*] to Skelton's name among the English poets [vol. ii. p. 227]: and having had an opportunity to compare the original edition [that of Marshe, 1568] with Mr. Chalmers's volume, I can pronounce the text verbally accurate, although taken from the reprint of 1736." *Brit. Bibliogr.* iv. 389. As Haslewood was generally a careful collator, I am greatly surprised at the above assertion: the truth is, that the reprint of 1736 (every word of which I have compared with Marshe's edition—itsself replete with errors) is in not a few places grossly inaccurate.—The said reprint is without the editor's name; but I have seen a copy of it in which Gifford had written with a pencil, "Edited by J. Bowle, the stupidest of all two-legged animals."

the addition of those other pieces by Skelton which were known to be extant,—observed, that “an editor who should be competent to the task could not more worthily employ himself than by giving a good and complete edition of his works.”<sup>1</sup> Prompted by this remark, I commenced the present edition,—perhaps with too much self-confidence, and certainly without having duly estimated the difficulties which awaited me. After all the attention which I have given to the writings of Skelton, they still contain corruptions which defy my power of emendation, and passages which I am unable to illustrate; nor is it, therefore, without a feeling of reluctance that I now offer these volumes to the very limited class of readers for whom they are intended. In revising my Notes for press, I struck out a considerable portion of conjectures and explanations which I had originally hazarded, being unwilling to receive from any one that equivocal commendation which Joseph Scaliger bestowed on a literary labourer of old; “*Laudo tamen studium tuum; quia in rebus obscuris ut errare necesse est, ita fortuitum non errare.*”<sup>2</sup>

Having heard that Ritson had made some collections for an edition of our author, I requested

<sup>1</sup> *Q. Rev.* xi. 485. The critique in question was written by Mr. Southey,—who, let me add, took a kind interest in the progress of the present edition.

<sup>2</sup> Joanni Isacio Pontano—*Epist.* p. 490. ed. 1627.

the use of those papers from his nephew, the late Joseph Frank, Esq., who most obligingly put them into my hands: they proved, however, to be only a transcript of *Vox Populi, vox Dei* (from the Harleian MS.) and a few memoranda concerning Skelton from very obvious sources.

The individual to whom I have been the most indebted for assistance and encouragement in this undertaking has not survived to receive my acknowledgments; I mean the late Mr. Heber, who not only lent me his whole collection of Skelton's works, but also took a pleasure in communicating to me from time to time whatever information he supposed might be serviceable. Indeed, without such liberality on the part of Mr. Heber, a complete edition of the poet's extant writings could not have been produced; for his incomparable library (now unfortunately dispersed) contained some pieces by Skelton, of which copies were not elsewhere to be found.

To Miss Richardson Currey; the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville; the Hon. and Rev. G. N. Grenville, Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge; Sir Harris Nicolas; Sir Francis Palgrave; Rev. Dr. Bandinel; Rev. Dr. Bliss; Rev. John Mitford; Rev. J. J. Smith of Caius College, Cambridge; Rev. Joseph Hunter; Rev. Joseph Stevenson; W. H. Black, Esq.; Thomas Amyot, Esq.; J. P. Collier, Esq.; Thomas Wright, Esq.; J. O. Halliwell, Esq.; Albert Way, Esq.; and



*THE*  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
JOHN SKELTON.  
*WITH A MEMOIR.*

VOL. I.



BOSTON:  
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1866.

	Page
Agaynste a comely coystrowne, that curyowsly chawntyd, and curryshly cowntred, &c. ....	19
<i>Contra alium cantiantem et organisantem asinum, &amp;c. ....</i>	22
Vppon a deedmans hed, that was sent to hym from an honorable jentyllwoman for a token, &c. ....	23
"Womanhod, wanton, ye want," &c. ....	25

DIYERS BALETTS AND DYTIES SOLACYOUS:—

"My darlyng dere, my daysy floure," &c. ....	27
"The auncient acquaintance, madam, betwen vs twayn," &c. ....	28
"Knolege, aquayntance, resort, fauour with grace," &c. ....	31
" <i>Cuncta licet cecidisse putas discrimina rerum,</i> " &c. .	33
"Though ye suppose all jeperdys ar paste," &c. ...	33
"Go, pytyous hart, rasyd with dedly wo," &c. ....	33
Manerly Margery Mylk and Ale .....	35
The Bowge of Courte .....	37
Phyllyp Sparowe .....	61
The tunnyng of Elynour Rummyng .....	109
Poems against Garnesche .....	132
Against venemous tongues, &c. ....	154
How euery thing must haue a tyme .....	160
Prayer to the Father of Heauen .....	162
To the Seconde Parson .....	163
To the Holy Gooste .....	163
"Woffully araid," &c. ....	165
"Now synge we, as we were wont," &c. ....	168
" <i>I, liber, et prospera, regem tu pronus adora,</i> " &c. ....	172
Ware the Hauke .....	173
<i>Epitaphe. A Devoute Trentale for old John Clarke, &amp;c. ...</i>	187

	Page
" <i>Diligo rustincum cum portant</i> ," &c. ....	194
<i>Lamentatio urbis Norwicen</i> .....	194
<i>In Bedel</i> , &c. ....	195
" <i>Hanc volo transcribas</i> ," &c. ....	196
" <i>Igitur quia sunt qui mala cuncta fremunt</i> ," &c. ....	196
" <i>Salve plus decies quam sunt momenta dierum</i> ," &c. ....	197
<i>Henrici Septimi Epitaphium</i> .....	198
<i>Eulogium pro suorum temporum conditione, tantis principi-</i> <i>bus non indignum</i> .....	199
<i>Tetrastichon veritatis</i> .....	201
Against the Scottes .....	202
Vnto diuers people that remord this rymynge, &c. ....	209
<i>Chorus de Dis contra Scottos</i> , &c. ....	211
<i>Chorus de Dis</i> , &c. <i>super triumphali victoria contra Gallos</i> , &c. ....	212
<i>Vikissimus Scotus Dundas allegat caudas contra Anglige-</i> <i>nas</i> .....	218
<i>Elegia in Margareta nuper comitissa de Derby funebre mi-</i> <i>nisterium</i> .....	217
Why were ye <i>Calliope</i> embrawdred with letters of golde? 219	
<i>Cur tibi contezta est aurea Calliope?</i> .....	220
The Boke of Three Fooles .....	221
A replecacion agaynst certayne yong scoles abiured of late, &c. ....	230





SOME ACCOUNT  
OF  
SKELTON AND HIS WRITINGS.

---

JOHN SKELTON<sup>1</sup> is generally said to have been descended from the Skeltons of Cumberland;<sup>2</sup> but there is some reason to believe that Norfolk was his native county. The time of his birth, which is left to conjecture, cannot well be carried back to an earlier year than 1460.

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes written *Schelton*: and Blomefield says, "That his Name was *Shelton* or Skelton, appears from his Successor's Institution, viz. '1529, 17 July, Thomas Clerk, instituted on the Death of John *Shelton*, last Rector [Lib. Inst. No. 18.]'" *Hist. of Norfolk*, i. 20. ed. 1789.

<sup>2</sup> "John Skelton was a younger branch of the Skeltons of Skelton in this County [Cumberland]. I crave leave of the Reader, (hitherto not having full instructions, and) preserving the undoubted Title of this County unto him, to defer his character to Norfolk, where he was beneficed at Diss therein." Fuller's *Worthies*, p. 221 (*Cumberland*), ed. 1662. "John Skelton is placed in this County [Norfolk] on a double probability. First, because an ancient family of his name is emi-

[The following entry pertaining to a John Skelton was discovered by Mr. W. H. Black in the Public Record Office.]

28d Feb. 12 Edw. iv. [1473]. "Tribus *subclericis*, videlicet Roberto Lane, Nicholao Neubold, et *Johanni Skelton*, videlicet prædicto Roberto l.s. et prædictis Nicholao et Johanni cuilibet eorum x.l.s." (A like payment was made to *John Skelton* on the 9th of Dec. preceding, when he is mentioned with others under the general denomination of *clerks*.) *Books of the Treasury of the Receipt of the Exchequer*,—A 4. 38. fols. 26, 27. (Public Record Office.)

There is, Mr. Black thinks, a possibility that Skelton had been employed, while a youth, as an under-clerk in the Receipt of the Exchequer; and he observes, that it would seem to have been a temporary occupation, as there is no trace of any person of that name among the admissions to offices in the Black Book.

nently known long fixed therein. Secondly, because he was beneficed at Dis," &c. *Id.* p. 257 (*Norfolk*).—"John Skelton . . . was originally, if not nearly, descended from the Skeltons of Cumberland." Wood's *Ath. Oxon.* i. 49. ed. Bliss. See also Tanner's *Biblioth.* p. 675. ed. 1748.—"I take it, that Skelton was not only Rector, but a Native of this Place [Diss], being son of William Skelton, and Margaret his Wife, whose Will was proved at Norwich, Nov. 7, 1512 [Regr. Johnson]." Blomefield's *Hist. of Norfolk*, i. 20. ed. 1739. Through the active kindness of Mr. Amyot, I have received a copy of the Will of William Skelton (or Shelton,) who, though perhaps a relation, was surely not the father of the poet; for in this full and explicit document the name of *John Skelton* does not once occur.—From an entry which will be afterwards cited, it would seem that the Christian name of Skelton's mother

The statement of his biographers, that he was educated at Oxford,<sup>1</sup> I am not prepared to contradict: but if he studied there, it was at least after he had gone through an academical course at the sister university; for he has himself expressly declared,

"Alma parens O Cantabrigensis,  
 . . . . .  
 . . . tibi quondam carus alumnus eram;"

adding in a marginal note, "Cantabrigia Skeltonidi laureato primam mammam eruditionis pientissime propinavit."<sup>2</sup> Hence it is probable that the poet was the "one Scheklton," who, according to Cole, became M. A. at Cambridge in 1484.<sup>3</sup>

was Johanna.—In Skelton's Latin lines on the city of Norwich (see vol. i. 194) we find,

"Ah decus, ah *patriæ* specie pulcherrima dudum!  
 Urbs Norvicensis," &c.

Does "*patriæ*" mean his native county?

<sup>1</sup> "Having been educated in this university, as Joh. Baleus attests." Wood's *Ath. Oxon.* i. 50. ed. Bliss. Wood's reference in the note is "In lib. *De Scriptoribus Anglicis*, MS. inter cod. MSS. Selden, in bib. Bodl. p. 69 b." The printed copy of Bale's work contains no mention of the place of Skelton's education. Part of Bale's information concerning Skelton, as appears from the still extant MS. collections for his *Script. Illust. Brit.*, was received "Ex Guilhelmo Horman," the author of the *Vulgaria*.—See also Tanner's *Biblioth.* p. 675. ed. 1748.—Warton says that Skelton "studied in both our universities." *Hist. of E. P.* ii. 336. ed. 4to.

<sup>2</sup> *A Replycation*, &c. vol. i. 231.

<sup>3</sup> "Wood reckons him of Ox. on the author. of Bale in a MS. in the Bodleian Libr., but with much better reason he

Of almost all Skelton's writings which have descended to our times, the first editions<sup>1</sup> have perished; and it is impossible to determine either at what period he commenced his career as a poet, or at what dates his various pieces were originally printed. That he was the author of many compositions which are no longer extant, we learn from the pompous enumeration of their titles in the *Garlande of Laurell*.<sup>2</sup> The lines, *Of the death of the noble prince, Kyng Edwards the forth*.<sup>3\*</sup> who deceased in 1483, were probably among his earliest attempts in verse.

In 1489 Skelton produced an elegy *Vpon the doulourus dethe and muche lamentable chaunce of*

may be called ours; for I find one Scheklton M. A. in the year 1484, at which time allowing him to be 24 years of age, he must be at his death A. D. 1529, 68 or 69 years old, which 'tis probable he might be. v. Bale 658." Cole's *Collections*.—*Add. MSS.* (Brit. Mus.) 5880, p. 199.

<sup>1</sup> I suspect that, during Skelton's lifetime, two of his most celebrated pieces, *Olyn Cloute* (see v. 1239, vol. ii. 167,) and *Why come ye nat to Courte*, were not committed to the press, but wandered about in manuscript among hundreds of eager readers. A portion of *Speke, Parrot*, and the *Poems Against Garnesche*, are now for the first time printed.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ii. 221 sqq. No poetical antiquary can read the titles of some of the lighter pieces mentioned in that catalogue,—such as *The Balade of the Mustarde Tarte*, *The Murnyng of the mapely rote* (see Notes, vol. iii 343,) &c.—without regretting their loss. "Many of the songs or popular ballads of this time," observes Sir John Hawkins, "appear to have been written by Skelton." *Hist. of Music*, iii. 39.

<sup>3</sup> Vol i. 3.

*the most honorable Erle of Northumberland*,<sup>1</sup> who was slain during a popular insurrection in Yorkshire. His son Henry Algernon Percy, the fifth earl, who is there mentioned as the "yonge lyon, but tender yet of age,"<sup>2</sup> appears to have afterwards extended his patronage to the poet:<sup>3</sup> at a time when persons of the highest rank were in general grossly illiterate, this nobleman was both a lover and a liberal encourager of letters.

Skelton had acquired great reputation as a scholar, and had recently been laureated at Oxford,<sup>4</sup> when Caxton, in 1490, published *The boke of Eneydos complied by Vyrgyle*,<sup>5</sup> in the Preface to

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. 8: see Notes, vol. iii. 7.

<sup>2</sup> He was only eleven years old at his father's death. See more concerning the fifth earl in Percy's Preface to *The Northumberland Household Book*, 1770, in Warton's *Hist. of E. P.* ii. 888. ed. 4to, and in Collins's *Peerage*, ii. 304. ed. Brydges.—Warton says that the Earl "encouraged Skelton to write this elegy," an assertion grounded, I suppose, on the Latin lines prefixed to it.

<sup>3</sup> A splendid MS. volume, consisting of poems (chiefly by Lydgate), finely written on vellum, and richly illuminated, which formerly belonged to the fifth earl, is still preserved in the British Museum, *MS. Reg.* 18. *D ii*: at fol. 165 is Skelton's Elegy on the earl's father.

<sup>4</sup> For a notice of Skelton's laureation at Oxford, the Rev. Dr. Bliss obligingly searched the archives of that university, but without success: "no records," he informs me, "remain between 1463 and 1498 that will give a correct list of degrees."

<sup>5</sup> This work (a thin folio), translated by Caxton from the French, is a prose romance founded on the *Æneid*. It consists of 65 chapters, the first entitled "How the ryght puyse-

which is the following passage: "But I praye mayster John Skelton, late created poete laureate in the vnyuersite of oxenforde, to ouersee and correcte this sayd booke, And taddresse and expowne where as shalle be founde faulte to theym that shall requyre it. For hym I knowe for suffy-cyent to expowne and englysshe euery diffyculte that is therin. For he hath late translated the epystlys of Tulle,<sup>1</sup> and the boke of dyodorus syculus,<sup>2</sup> and diuerse other werkes oute of latyn in to

sant knyge pryamus edyfyed the grete Cyte of Troye," the last, "How Ascanys helde the royalme of Ytalye after the dethe of Eneas hys fader." Gawin Douglas, in the Preface to his translation of Virgil's poem, makes a long and elaborate attack on Caxton's performance;

"Wylliame Caxtoun had no compatioun  
Of Virgill in that buk he preynt in prois,  
Clepard it Virgill in Eneados,  
Quhilk that he sayis of Frensche he did translate;  
It has na thing ado therwith, God wate,  
Nor *na mare like than the Deuil and sanct Austin*," &c.

Sig. B iii. ed. 1558.

<sup>1</sup> A work probably never printed, and now lost: it is mentioned by Skelton in the *Garlande of Laurell*;

"Of *Tullis Familiars* the translacyoun." vol. ii. 222.

<sup>2</sup> A work mentioned in the same poem;

"*Diodorus Siculus* of my translacyon

Out of fresshe Latine into owre Englysshe playne,  
Recountyng commoditis of many a straunge nacyon;  
Who redyth it ones wolde rede it agayne;  
Sex volumis engrosid together it doth containe."

vol. ii. 237.

It is preserved in Ms. at Cambridge: see Appendix II. to this Memoir.

englysshe, not in rude and olde langage, but in polysshed and ornate termes craftely, as he that hath redde vyrgyle, ouyde, tullye, and all the other noble poetes and oratours, to me vnknownen : And also he hath redde the ix. muses and vnderstande theyr musicalle scyences, and to whom of theym eche scyence is appropred. I suppose he hath dronken of Elycons well. Then I praye hym & suche other to correcte adde or mynysshe where as he or they shall fynde faulte,"<sup>1</sup> &c. The laureatship in question, however, was not the office of poet laureat according to the modern acceptation of the term : it was a degree in grammar, including rhetoric and versification, taken at the university, on which occasion the graduate was presented with a wreath of laurel.<sup>2</sup> To this academical honour Skelton proudly alludes in his fourth poem *Against Garnesche* ;

" A kyng to me myn habyte gaue :  
At Oxforth, the vniversitye,

<sup>1</sup> Sig. A ii.

<sup>2</sup> For more about poet laureat, both in the ancient and modern acceptation, see Selden's *Titles of Honor*, p. 405. ed. 1631; the Abbé du Resnel's *Recherches sur les Poètes Couronnez*,—*Hist. de l'Acad. des Inscript. (Mém. de Littérature)*, x. 507; Warton's *Hist. of E. P.* ii. 129. ed. 4to; Malone's *Life of Dryden*, (*Prose Works*,) p. 78; Devon's *Introd. to Issue Roll of Thomas de Brantingham*, p. xxix., and his *Introd. to Issues of the Exchequer*, &c., p. xlii.—Churchyard, in his verses prefixed to Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568, says,

" Nay, Skelton wore the lawrell wreath,  
And past in schoels, ye knoe."

See Appendix I. to this Memoir.



Anaunsid I was to that degre;  
 By hole consent of theyr senate,  
 I was made poete lawreate."<sup>1</sup>

Our laureat, a few years after, was admitted *ad eundem* at Cambridge: "An. Dom. 1493, et Hen. 7 nono. Conceditur Johi Skelton Poete in partibus transmarinis atque Oxon, Laureæ ornato, ut apud nos eadem decoraretur;" again, "An. 1504-5, Conceditur Johi Skelton, Poetæ Laureat. quod possit stare eodem gradu hic quo stetit Oxoniis, et quod possit uti habitu sibi concessa a Principe." Warton, who cites both these entries,<sup>2</sup> remarks, "the latter clause, I believe, relates to some distinction of habit, perhaps of fur or velvet, granted him by the king." There can be no doubt that Skelton speaks of this peculiar apparel in the lines just quoted, as also in his third poem *Against Garnesche*, where he says,

"Your sworde ye swere, I wene,  
 So tranchaunt and so kene,  
 Xall kyt both wyght and grene:  
 Your foly ys to grett  
 The kynges colours to threte;"<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. 149.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. of E. P.* ii. 180, (note,) ed. 4to.—The second entry was printed in 1736 by the Abbé du Resnel (who received it from Carte the historian,) in *Recherches sur les Poètes Couronnez*,—*Hist. de l'Acad. des Inscript. (Mém. de Littérature,)* x. 522. Both entries were given in 1767 by Farmer in the second edition of his *Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare*, p. 50.—The Rev. Joseph Romilly, registrar of the University of Cambridge, has obligingly ascertained for me their correctness.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. i. 144.

from which we may infer that he wore, as laureat, a dress of white and green, or, perhaps, a white dress with a wreath of laurel. It was most probably on some part of the same habit that the word *Calliope* was embroidered in letters of silk and gold :

" Calliope,  
As ye may se,  
Regent is she  
Of poetes al,  
Whiche gaue to me  
The high degre  
Laureat to be  
Of fame royall;  
*Whose name enrolde  
With silke and golde  
I dare be bolde  
Thus for to were,*"<sup>1</sup> &c.

In the following passage Barclay perhaps glances at Skelton, with whom (as will afterwards be shewn) he was on unfriendly terms ;

" But of their writing though I ensue the rate,  
No name I chalenge of *Poete laureate* :  
That name vnto them is mete and doth agree  
Which writeth matters with curiositee.  
Mine habite blacke accordeth not with *grene*,  
Blacke betokeneth death as it is dayly sene ;  
The *grene* is pleasour, freshe lust and iolite ;  
These two in nature hath great diuersitie.  
Then who would ascribe, except he were a foole,  
The pleasaunt *laurer* vnto the mourning cowle ? " <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. 219.

<sup>2</sup> *Prologe to Egloges*, sig. A 1. ed. 1570.

Warton has remarked, that some of Skelton's Latin verses, which are subscribed—"Hæc laureatus Skeltonis, regius orator"—"Per Skeltonida laureatum, oratorem regium,"—seem to have been written in the character of *royal* laureate; <sup>1</sup> and perhaps the expression "of fame royall" in Skelton's lines on *Calliope*, already cited, may be considered as strengthening this supposition. There would, indeed, be no doubt that Skelton was not only a poet laureated at the universities, but also poet laureat or court poet to Henry the Eighth, if the authenticity of the following statement were established; "la patente qui declare Skelton poète laureat d'Henry viii. est datée de la cinquième année de son règne, ce qui tombe en 1512 ou 1513:" so (after giving correctly the second entry concerning Skelton's laureation at Cambridge) writes the Abbé du Resnel in an essay already mentioned; having received, it would seem, both these statements concerning Skelton from Carte the historian, <sup>2</sup> who, while he communicated to Du Resnel one real document, was not

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. of E. P.* ii. 132 (note,) ed. 4to, where Warton gives the subscription of the former as the title of the latter poem: his mistake was occasioned by the reprint of Skelton's *Works*, 1736. See the present edition, vol. i. 211, 212.

<sup>2</sup> Du Resnel expressly says that he was made acquainted with the Cambridge entry by "M. Carte, autrement M. Phillips." *Recherches sur les Poètes Couronnez,—Hist. de l'Acad. des Inscript. (Mém. de Littérature,)* x. 522.—Carte assumed the name of Phillips when he took refuge in France.

likely to have forged another for the purpose of misleading the learned Frenchman. On this subject I can only add, that no proof has been discovered of Skelton's having enjoyed an annual salary from the crown in consequence of such an office.

The reader will have observed that in the first entry given above from the Cambridge Univ. Regist. Skelton is described as having been laureated not only at Oxford but also "transmarinis partibus." That the foreign seat of learning at which he received this honour was the university of Louvaine,<sup>1</sup> may be inferred from the title of a poem which I subjoin entire, not only because it occurs in a volume of the greatest rarity, but because it evinces the celebrity which Skelton had attained.

"IN CLARISSIMI SCHELTONIS LOUVANIENSIS POETÆ  
LAUDES EPIGRAMMA.

Quum terra omnifero lætissima risit amictu,  
Plena novo fœstu quælibet arbor erat;  
Vertice purpurei vultus incepit honores  
Extensis valvis pandere pulchra rosa;  
Et segetum tenero sub cortice grana tumescunt,  
Flavescens curvat pendula spica caput.  
Vix Cancrî tropicos æstus lustravit anhelans  
Pythius, et Nemeæ vertit ad ora feræ,

---

<sup>1</sup> A gentleman resident at Louvaine obligingly examined for me the registers of that university, but could find in them no mention of Skelton.

Vesper solis equos oriens dum clausit Olympo, <sup>1</sup>  
 Agmina stellarum surgere cuncta jubet:  
 Hic primo aspiceres ut Cynthia vecta sereno  
 Extulerat surgens cornua clara polo;  
 Inde Hydram cernas, stravit quam clava trinodis  
 Alcidae, nitidis emicuisse comis;  
 Tum <sup>1</sup> Procyon subiit, præpes Lepus, hinc Jovis ales,  
 Arctos, et Engonasus, sidus et Eridani;  
 Ignivomis retinet radiis quæ stellifer orbis  
 (Quid multis remorer?) sidera cuncta micant.  
 Nutat Atlanteum convexum pondus, ocellis  
 Dum lustrò hæc ægris, vergit et oceano.  
 Tum furtim alma quies repens mihi membra soporat,  
 Curaque Lethæo flumine mersa jacet:  
 O mihi quam placidis Icelos tulit aurea somnis  
 Somnia, musiphillis non caritura fide!  
 Nuncia percelebris Polyhymnia blanda salutans  
 Me Clarii ut visam numina sacra citat.  
 Ut sequar hanc lætus, mihi visus amena vireta  
 Et nemorum umbrosos præsteriisse sinus:  
 Scilicet hæc montes monstraverat inter eundum  
 Et fontes Musæ quos coluere sacros;  
 Castalios latices, Aganippidos atque Medusei  
 Vidimus alipedia flumina rupta pede;  
 Antra hinc Libethri monstrat Pimpleidos undas,  
 Post vada Cephisi, Phocidos atque lacus;  
 Nubifer assurgit mons Pierus atque Cithæron,  
 Gryneumque nemus dehinc Heliconque sacer:  
 Inde et Parnasi bifidi secreta subimus,  
 Tota ubi Mnemosynes sancta propago manet.  
 Turba pudica novem dulce hic cecinere sororum;  
 Delius in medio plectra chelynque sonat:  
 Aurifluis laudat modulis monumenta suorum  
 Vatum, quos dignos censet honore poli:

---

<sup>1</sup> The original has "Cum:" but the initial letters of the lines were intended to form a distich; see the conclusion of the poem.

De quo certarunt Salamin, Cumæ, vel Athenæ,  
Smyrna, Chios, Colophon, primus Homerus erat;  
Laudat et Orpheum, domuit qui voce leones,  
Eurydicen Stygiis qui rapuitque rogis;  
Antiquum meminit Musæum Eumolpide natum,  
Te nec Aristophanes Euripidesque tacet;  
Vel canit illustrem genuit quem Teia tellus,  
Quemque fovit dulci Coa camena sinu;  
Deinde cothurnatum celebrem dat laude Sophoclem,  
Et quam Lesbides pavit amore Phaon;  
Æschylus, Amphion, Thespis nec honore carebant,  
Pindarus, Alcæus, quem tuleratque Paros;  
Sunt alii plures genuit quos terra Pelasga,  
Daphnæum cecinit quos meruisse decus:  
Tersa Latinorum dehinc multa poemata texit,  
Laude nec Argivis inferiora probat;  
Insignem tollit ter vatem, cui dedit Andes  
Cunas urbs, clarum Parthenopœa taphum;  
Blanda Corinna, tui Ponto religatus amore,  
Sulmoni natus Naso secundus erat;  
Inde nitore fluens lyricus genere Appulus ille  
Qui Latiis primus mordica metra tulit;  
Statius Æacidem sequitur Thebaida pingens,  
Emathio hinc scribens prælia gesta solo;  
Cui Verona parens hinc mollis scriptor amorum,  
Tu nec in obscuro, culte Tibulle, lates;  
Haud reticendus erat cui patria Bilbilis, atque  
Persius hinc mordax crimina spurca notans;  
Eximius pollet vel Seneca luce tragœdus,  
Comicus et Latii bellica præda ducis;  
Laudat et hinc alios quos sæcula prisca fovebant;  
Hos omnes longum jam meminisse foret.  
Tum <sup>1</sup> Smintheus, paulo spirans, ait, ecce, sorores,  
Quæ clausa oceano terra Britanna nitet!  
Oxoniam claram Pataræa ut regna videtis,  
Aut Tenedos, Delos, qua mea fama viret:

---

<sup>1</sup> Here again the original has "Cum."

Nonne fluunt istic nitidæ ut Permessidos undæ,  
Istic et Aoniæ sunt juga visa mihi?  
Alma fovet vates nobis hæc terra ministros,  
Inter quos Schelton jure canendus adest:  
Numina nostra colit; canit hic vel carmina cedro  
Digna, Palatinis et socianda sacris;  
Grande decus nobis addunt sua scripta, linenda  
Auratis, digna ut posteritate, notis;  
Laudiflua excurrit serie sua culta poesis,  
Certatim palmam lectaque verba petunt;  
Ora lepore fluunt, sicuti dives Tagus auro,  
Aut pressa Hyblæis dulcia mella favis;  
Rhetoricus sermo riguo fecundior horto,  
Pulchrior est multo puniceisque rosis,  
Unda limpidior, Parioque politior albo,  
Splendidior vitro, candidiorque nive,  
Mitior Alcinoïs pomis, fragrantior ipso  
Thureque Pantheo, gratior et violis;  
Vincit te, suavi Demosthene, vincit Ulyxim  
Eloquio, atque senem quem tulit ipse Pylos;  
Ad fera bella trahat verbis, nequirit quod Atrides  
Aut Brisis, rigidum te licet, Æacides;  
Tantum ejus verbis tribuit Suadela Venusque  
Et Charites, animos quolibet ille ut agat,  
Vel Lacedæmonios quo Tyrtæus pede claudo  
Pieriis vincens martia tela modis,  
Magnus Alexander quo belliger actus ab illa  
Mæonii vatis grandisonante tuba;  
Gratia tanta suis virtusque est diva camenis,  
Ut revocet manes ex Acheronte citos;  
Leniat hic plectro vel pectora sæva leonum,  
Hic strepitu condant mœnia vasta lyræ;  
Omnimodos animi possit depellere morbos,  
Vel Niobes luctus Heliadumque truces;  
Reprimat hic rabidi Saulis sedetque furores,  
Inter delphinas alter Arion erit;  
Ire Cupidineos quovis hic cogat amores,  
Atque diu assuetos hic abolere queat;

Auspice me tripodas sentit, me inflante calores  
 Concipit æthereos, mystica diva canit;  
 Stellarum cursus, naturam vasti et Olympi,  
 Aeris et vires hic aperire potest,  
 Vel quid cunctiparens gremio tellus foveat almo;  
 Gurgite quid teneat velivolumque mare;  
 Monstratur digito phœnice ut rarior uno,  
 Ecce virum de quo splendida fama volat!  
 Ergo decus nostrum quo fulget honorque, sorores,  
 Heroas laudes accumulate viro;  
 Laudes accumulunt Satyri, juga densa Lycæi,  
 Pindi, vel Rhodopes, Mænala quique colunt;  
 Ingeminent plausus Dryades facilesque Napææ,  
 Oreadum celebris turba et Hamadryadum;  
 Blandisonum vatem, vos Oceanitidesque atque  
 Naiades, innumeris tollite præconiis;  
 Æterno vireat quo vos celebravit honore,  
 Illius ac astris fama perennis eat:  
 Nunc maduere satis vestro, nunc prata liquore  
 Flumina, Pierides, sistite, Phœbus ait.  
 Sat cecinisse tuum sit, mi Schelton, tibi laudi  
 Hæc Whitintonum: culte poeta, vale.  
 Ex capitalibus hexametrorum litteris solerter compositis emer-  
 git hoc distichon;  
 Quæ Whitintonus canit ad laudes tibi, Schelton,  
 Anglorum vatum gloria, sume libens." <sup>1</sup>

Another laudatory notice of Skelton by a con-  
 temporary writer will not here be out of place;

"To all aunccient poetes, litell boke, submytte the,  
 Whilom flouryng in eloquence facundious,

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<sup>1</sup> From the 4to volume entitled *Opusculum Roberti Whittintoni in florentissima Ozoniensi academia Laureati*. At the end, *Expliciūt Roberti Whittintoni Ozonie Protouatīs Epygrammata: una cū quibusdā Panegyricis. Impressa Lōdini per me wynandū de worde. Anno post virginēū partū. M. ccccc xix. decimo vero kalēdas Maii.*



And to all other whiche present nowe be;  
 Fyrst to maister Chaucer and Ludgate sentencious,  
 Also to preignaunt Barkley nowe beying religious,  
 To *inuentiue Skelton and poet laureate*;  
 Praye them all of pardon both erly and late." <sup>1</sup>

Skelton frequently styles himself "*orator regius*;" <sup>2</sup> but the nature of the office from which he derived the title is not, I believe, understood. The lines in which, as we have just seen, Whittington so lavishly praises his "*rhetoricus sermo*," allude most probably to his performances in the capacity of royal orator.

In 1498 Skelton took holy orders. The days on which, during that year, he was ordained successively subdeacon, deacon, and priest, are ascertained by the following entries:

"[In ecclesia conuentuali domus siue hospitalis sancti Thome martiris de Acon ciuitatis London. per Thomam Roth-lucensem episcopum vitimo die mensis Marcii]

M. Johannes Skelton London. dioc. ad titulum Mon. beate Marie de Gracilis iuxta Turrin London."

"[In cathedra sancti Pauli London. apud summum altare

<sup>1</sup> Henry Bradshaw's *Lyfe of Saynt Werburghe*, l. ii. c. 24. printed by Pynson 1521, 4to.

<sup>2</sup> See the two subscriptions already cited, p. xxii; and vol. i. 154, 230, vol. ii. 275.—"Clarus & facundus in utroque scribendi genere, prosa atque metro, habebatur." Bale, *Script. Illust. Brit. &c.* p. 651. ed. 1559. "Inter Rhetores regius orator factus." Pits, *De Illust. Angl. Script.* p. 701. ed. 1619. "With regard to the *Orator Regius*," says Warton, "I find one John Mallard in that office to Henry the eighth, and his epistolary secretary," &c. *Hist. of E. P.* ii. 182 (note), ed. 4to.

etiusdem per Thomam permissione diuina London. episcopum in sabbato sancto viz. xiiii die mensis Aprilis]

Johannes Skelton poete [sic] laureatus Lond. dioc. ad titulum Mon. de Graciis iuxta turrin London."

"[In ecclesia conuentali hospitalis beate Marie de Elsyng per Thomam Rothlucensem episcopum ix die mensis Iunii]

M. Johannes Skelton poeta lureatus [sic] London. dioc. ad titulum Mon. de Graciis iuxta turrin London." <sup>1</sup>

When Arthur, the eldest son of Henry the Seventh, was created Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester, in 1489,<sup>2</sup> Skelton celebrated the event in a composition (probably poetical) called *Prince Arturis Oreacyoun*,<sup>3</sup> of which the title alone remains; and when Prince Henry, afterwards Henry the Eighth, was created Duke of York, in 1494,<sup>4</sup> he was hailed by our author in some Latin verses — *Carmen ad principem, quando insignitus erat ducis Ebor. titulo*,—a copy of which (not to be found at present) was once among the MSS. in the Library of Lincoln Cathedral, having been seen by Tanner, who cites the initial words,—*"Si quid habes, mea Musa."*<sup>5</sup>

As at the last mentioned date Prince Henry

<sup>1</sup> Register *Hill* 1489–1505, belonging to the Diocese of London.

<sup>2</sup> 1st Octr.: see Sandford's *Geneal. Hist.* p. 476. ed. 1707.

<sup>3</sup> See the *Garlands of Laurell*, vol. ii. 221.

<sup>4</sup> Henry was created Duke of York 31st Octr. an. 10. Hen. vii. [1494]; see Sandford's *Geneal. Hist.* p. 480. ed. 1707. See also *The Creation of Henry Duke of Yorke*, &c. (from a Cottonian MS.) in Lord Somers's *Tracts*, i. 24. ed. Scott,

<sup>5</sup> *Biblioth.* p. 676. ed. 1748.

was a mere infant, there can be no doubt that the care of his education had not yet been intrusted to our poet. It must have been several years after 1494 that Skelton was appointed tutor to that prince,—an appointment which affords a striking proof of the high opinion entertained of his talents and learning, as well as of the respectability of his character. He has himself recorded that he held this important situation :

“ The honor of Englonde I lernyd to spelle,  
 In dygnyte roialle that doth excelle:  
 Note and marke wyl<sup>1</sup> thys parcele;  
 I yaue hym drynke of the sugryd welle  
 Of Eliconys waters crystallyne,  
 Aqueintyng hym with the Musys nyne.  
 Yt commyth thé wele me to remorde,  
 That creausner<sup>2</sup> was to thy sofre[yn]e] lorde:  
 It plesyth that noble prince roialle  
 Me as hys master for to calle  
 In hys lernyng primordialle.”<sup>3</sup>

And in another poem he informs us that he composed a treatise for the edification of his royal pupil :

<sup>1</sup> i. e. well.

<sup>2</sup> i. e. tutor: see Notes, vol. iii. 146.—When ladies attempt to write history, they sometimes say odd things: e. g. “It is affirmed that Skelton had been tutor to Henry [viii.] in some department of his education. *How probable it is* that the corruption imparted by this ribald and ill-living wretch laid the foundation for his royal pupil’s grossest crimes!” *Lives of the Queens of England* by Agnes Strickland, vol. iv. 104.

<sup>3</sup> Fourth Poem *Against Garnesche*, vol. i. 150.

"The Duke of Yorkis creauncer whan Skelton was,  
 Now Henry the viii. Kyng of Englonde,  
 A tratyse he deuysid and browght it to pas,  
 Callid *Speculum Principis*, to bere in his honde,  
 Therin to rede; and to vnderstande  
 All the demenour of princely astate,  
 To be our Kyng, of God preordinate." <sup>1</sup>

The *Speculum Principis* has perished: we are unable to determine whether it was the same work as that entitled *Methodos Skeltonidis laureati*, sc. *Præcepta quædam moralia Henrico principi, postea Henr. viii, missa*. Dat. apud Eltham A.D. MDI., which in Tanner's days <sup>2</sup> was extant (mul-tilated at the beginning) among the MSS. in the

<sup>1</sup> *Garlande of Laurell*, vol. ii. 224.—After noticing that while Arthur was yet alive, Henry was destined by his father to be archbishop of Canterbury, "it has been remarked," says Mrs. Thomson, "that the instructions bestowed upon Prince Henry by his preceptor, Skelton, were calculated to render him a scholar and a churchman, rather than an enlightened legislator." *Mem. of the Court of Henry the Eighth*, i. 2. But the description of the *Speculum Principis*, quoted above, is somewhat at variance with such a conclusion. The same lady observes in another part of her work, "To Skelton, who in conjunction with Giles Dewes, clerk of the library to Henry the Seventh, had the honour of being tutor to Henry the Eighth, this king evinced his approbation," ii. 590, and cites in a note the Epistle to Henry the Eighth prefixed to Palsgrave's *Lesclarissement de la Langue Francoyse*, 1580, where mention is made of "the synguler clerke maister Gyles Dewes somtyme instructour to your noble grace in this selfe tong." Though Dewes taught French to Henry, surely it by no means follows that he was "his tutor in conjunction with Skelton:" a teacher of French and a tutor are very different.

<sup>2</sup> *Biblioth.* p. 676. ed. 1748.

Lincoln-Cathedral Library, but which (like the Latin verses mentioned in a preceding page) has since been allowed to wander away from that ill-guarded collection.

When Prince Henry was a boy of nine years old, Erasmus dedicated to him an ode *De Laudibus Britanniae, Regisque Henrici Septimi ac Regiorum Liberorum*. The Dedication contains the following memorable encomium on Skelton; "Et hæc quidem interea tamquam ludicra munuscula tuæ pueritiæ dicavimus, uberiora largituri ubi tua virtus una cum ætate accrescens uberiores carminum materiam suppeditabit. Ad quod equidem te adhortarer, nisi et ipse jamdudum sponte tua velis remisque (ut aiunt) eo tenderes, et *domi haberes Skeltonum, unum Britannicarum literarum lumen ac decus*, qui tua studia possit, non solum accendere, sed etiam consummare;" and in the Ode are these lines;

"Jam puer Henricus, genitoris nomine lætus,  
*Monstrante fonteis vate Skeltono sacros,*  
 Palladius teneris meditatur ab unguibus arteis."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Erasmii Opera*, i. 1214, 1216, ed. 1708.—The Ode is appended to Erasmus's Latin version of the *Hecuba* and *Iphigenia in Aulide* of Euripides, printed by Aldus in 1507; and in that edition the second line which I have quoted is found with the following variation,

"Monstrante fonteis vate *Laurigero* sacros."

"It is probable," says Granger, "that if that great and good man [Erasmus] had read and perfectly understood his [Skelton's] 'pithy, pleasaunt, and profitable works,' as they

The circumstances which led to the production of this Ode are related by Erasmus in the following curious passage: "Is erat labor tridui, et tamen labor, quod jam annos aliquot nec legeram nec scripseram ullum carmen. Id partim pudor a nobis extorsit, partim dolor. Pertraxerat me Thomas Morus,<sup>1</sup> qui tum me in prædio Montjoii<sup>2</sup> agentem inviserat, ut animi causa in proximum vicum<sup>3</sup> expatiaremur. Nam illic educabantur omnes liberi regii, uno Arcturo excepto, qui tum erat natu maximus. Ubi ventum est in aulam, conve-

were lately reprinted, he would have spoken of him in less honourable terms." *Biog. Hist. of Engl.* i. 102. ed. 1775. The remark is sufficiently foolish: in Skelton's works there are not a few passages which Erasmus, himself a writer of admirable wit, must have relished and admired; and it was not without reason that he and our poet have been classed together as satirists, in the following passage; "By what meanes could Skelton that laureat poet, or Erasmus that great and learned clarke, have vttered their mindes so well at large, as thorowe their clokes of mery conceytes in wryting of toyes and foolish theames: as Skelton did by *Speake parrot*, *Ware the hauke*, *the Tunning of Elynour Rumming*, *Why come ye not to the Courte?* *Philip Sparrowe*, and such like: yet what greater sense or better matter can be, than is in this ragged ryme containyd? Or who would haue hearde his fault so playnely tolde him, if not in such giblyng sorte? Also Erasmus, vnder his *præse of Folly*, what matters hath he touched therein?" &c. *The Golden Aphroditis*, &c. by John Grange, 1577 (I quote from *Censura Liter.* vol. i. 382. ed. 1815.)

<sup>1</sup> Then a student of Lincoln's Inn.

<sup>2</sup> The country-seat of Lord Mountjoy.

<sup>3</sup> Probably Eltham.

nit tota pompa, non solum domus illius, verum etiam Montjoiciæ. Stabat in medio Henricus annos natus novem, jam tum indolem quandam regiam præ se ferens, h. e. animi celsitudinem cum singulari quadam humanitate conjunctam. A dextris erat Margareta, undecim ferme annos nata, quæ post nupsit Jacobo Scotorum Regi. A sinistris, Maria lusitans annos nata quatuor. Nam Edmondus adhuc infans, in ulnis gestabatur. Morus cum Arnoldo sodali salutato puero Henrico, quo rege nunc floret Britannia, nescio quid scriptorum obtulit. Ego, quoniam hujusmodi nihil expectabam, nihil habens quod exhiberem, pollicitus sum aliquo pacto meum erga ipsum studium aliquando declaraturum. Interim subirascebar Moro, quod non præmonuisset; et eo magis, quod puer Epistolio inter prandendum ad me misso, meum calamum provocaret. Abii domum, ac vel invitis Musis, cum quibus jam longum fuerat divortium, Carmen intra tridum absolvi. Sic et ultus sum dolorem meum et pudorem sarsi.”<sup>1</sup>

The mother of Henry the Seventh, the Countess of Richmond and Derby, is well known to have used her utmost exertions for the advancement of literature; she herself translated some pieces from

<sup>1</sup> *Catal. (Primus) Lucubrationum*, p. 2. prefixed to the above-cited vol. of *Erasmii Opera*.—In Turner's *Hist. of the Reign of Henry the Eighth*, it is erroneously stated that Erasmus “had the interview which he thus describes, at the residence of Lord Mountjoy.” i. 11. ed. 8vo.

the French; and, under her patronage, several works (chiefly works of piety) were rendered into English by the most competent scholars of the time. It is to her, I apprehend, that Skelton alludes in the following passage of the *Garlande of Laurell*, where he mentions one of his lost performances;

“Of *my lady's* grace at the contemplacyoun,  
Owt of Frenshe into Englysshe prose,  
Of Mannes Lyfe the Peregrynacioun,  
He did translate, enterprete, and disclose.”<sup>1</sup>

According to Churchyard, Skelton was “seldom out of princis grace:”<sup>2</sup> yet among the *Actes, Orders, and Decrees made by the King and his Counsell, remaining amongst the Records of the Court, now commonly called the Court of Requests*, we find, under *anno* 17. *Henry* vii.; “10 Junii apud Westminster *Jo. Skelton* commissus carceribus Janitoris Domini Regis.”<sup>3</sup> What could have occasioned this restraint, I cannot even conjecture. but in those days of extrajudicial imprisonments he might have been incarcerated for a very slight offence. It is, however, by no means certain that the “*Jo. Skelton*” of the above entry was the individual who forms the subject of the present

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii. 224.

<sup>2</sup> Lines prefixed to Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568; see Appendix I. to this Memoir.

<sup>3</sup> p. 80,—1592, 4to.



essay;<sup>1</sup> and it is equally doubtful whether or not the following entry, dated the same year, relates to the mother of the poet;

(Easter term, 17. Henry vii.) "*Johanne* } iij.ii. vj.s. viij.d."  
*Skelton* vidus de regard. Domini Regis<sup>2</sup> }

It has been already shewn that Skelton took holy orders in 1498.<sup>3</sup> How soon after that period he became rector of Diss in Norfolk, or what portion of his life was spent there in the exercise of his duties, cannot be ascertained. He certainly resided there in 1504 and 1511,<sup>4</sup> and, as it would

<sup>1</sup> According to the xiv<sup>th</sup> of the *Merie Tales of Skelton* (see Appendix I. to the present Memoir,) he was "long confined in prison at Westminster by the command of the cardinal:" but the tract is of such a nature that we must hesitate about believing a single statement which it contains. Even supposing that at some period or other Skelton was really imprisoned by Wolsey, that imprisonment could hardly have taken place so early as 1502. As far as I can gather from his writings, Skelton first offended Wolsey by glancing at him in certain passages of *Colyn Cloute*, and in those passages the cardinal is alluded to as being in the fulness of pomp and power.

<sup>2</sup> By Writ of Privy Seal—*Auditor's Calendar of Files from 1486 to 1522*, fol. 101 (b.), in the Public Record Office.

<sup>3</sup> Ritson (*Bibliog. Poet.* p. 102) says that Skelton was "*chaplain* to king Henry the eighth:" qy. on what authority?

<sup>4</sup> "He . . . was Rector and lived here [at Diss] in 1504 and in 1511, as I find by his being Witness to several Wills in this year. (Note) 1504, The Will of Mary Cowper of Disse, 'Witnesses Master John Skelton, Laureat, Parson of Disse, &c.' And among the Evidences of Mr. Thomas Coggeshall, I find the House in the Tenure of Master Skelton, Laureat. . . . Mr. Le-Neve says, that his [Skelton's] Institution does

seem from some of his compositions,<sup>1</sup> in 1506, 1507 and 1513; in the year of his decease he was, at least nominally, the rector of Diss.<sup>2</sup>

We are told<sup>3</sup> that for keeping, under the title

not appear in the Books, which is true, for often those that were collated by the Pope, had no Institution from the Bishop, many Instances of which in those Books occur; but it is certain from abundance of Records and Evidences that I have seen, that he was Rector several years." Blomefield's *Hist. of Norfolk*, i. 20. ed. 1739.—The parish-register of Diss affords no information concerning Skelton; for the earliest date which it contains is long posterior to his death.

<sup>1</sup> See *A devoute trentale for old John Clarke*, who died in 1506, vol. i. 187; *Lamentatio urbis Norwicens.*, written in 1507, p. 194; and *Chorus de Dis*, &c. in 1513, p. 211.

<sup>2</sup> I may notice here, that in an Assessment for a Subsidy, temp. Henry viii., we find, under "Sancte Helene Parishe within Bisshoppisgate,"—

"Mr. Skelton in goodes xl. li."

*Books of the Treasury of the Exchequer*, B. 4. 15, fol. 7.—Public Record Office. Qy. was this our author?\*

<sup>3</sup> "Cum quibusdam blateronibus fraterculis, præcipue Dominicanis, bellum gerebat continuum. Sub pseudopontifice Nordouicensi Ricardo Nixo, mulierem illam, quam sibi secreto ob Antichristi metum desponsauerat, sub concubinæ titulo custodiebat. In ultimo tamen uitæ articulo super ea re interrogatus, respondit, se nusquam illam in conscientia coram Deo nisi pro uxore legitima tenuisse. . . . animam egit . . . relictis liberis." Bale, *Script. Illust. Brit.* pp. 651, 2. ed. 1559.—"In Monachos præsertim Prædicatores S. Dominici sæpe stylum acuit, & terminos prætergressus modestiæ, contra eos scommatibus acerbius egit. Quo facto suum exasperavit Episcopum Richardum Nixum, qui habito de vita & moribus eius examine, deprehendit hominem votam Deo castitatem violasse, imo concubinam domi suæ diu tenuisse." Pits, *De Illust. Angl. Script.* p. 701. ed. 1619.—"The Dominican Friars were the next he contested with, whose viciousness

of a concubine, a woman whom he had secretly married, Skelton was called to account, and suspended from his ministerial functions by his diocesan, the bloody-minded and impure Richard Nykke (or Nix),<sup>1</sup> at the instigation of the friars,

lay pat enough for his hand; but such foul Lubbers fell heavy on all which found fault with them. These instigated Nix, Bishop of Norwich, to call him to account for keeping a Concubine, which cost him (as it seems) a suspension from his benefice. . . . We must not forget, how being charged by some on his death-bed for begetting many children on the aforesaid Concubine, he protested, that in his Conscience he kept her in the notion of a wife, though such his cowardliness that he would rather confess adultery (then accounted but a venial) than own marriage, esteemed a capital crime in that age." Fuller's *Worthies*, p. 257, (Norfolk,) ed. 1662.—Anthony Wood, with his usual want of charity towards the sons of genius, says that Skelton "having been guilty of certain crimes, (as most poets are,) at least not agreeable to his coat, fell under the heavy censure of Rich. Nykke bishop of Norwich his diocesan; especially for his scoffs and ill language against the monks and dominicans in his writings." *Ath. Oxon.* i. 50. ed. Bliss, who adds in a note, "Mr. Thomas Delafield in his MS. *Collection of Poets Laureate, &c.* among Gough's MSS. in the Bodleian, says it was in return for his being married, an equal crime in the ecclesiastics of those days, bishop Nykke suspended him from his church."—Tanner gives as one of the reasons for Skelton's taking sanctuary at Westminster towards the close of his life, "propter quod uxorem habuit." *Biblioth.* p. 675. ed. 1748.—In the xiii<sup>th</sup> of the *Merie Tales* (see Appendix I. to the present Memoir) Skelton's wife is mentioned.

<sup>1</sup> "Cui [Nix] utcunque a nive nomen videatur inditum, adeo nihil erat nivei in pectore, luxuriosis cogitationibus plurimum æstuante, ut atro carbone libidines ejus notandæ videantur, si vera sunt quæ de illo a Nevillo perhibentur." Godwin *De Præsul. Angl.* p. 440. ed. 1743.

chiefly the Dominicans, whom the poet had severely handled in his writings. It is said, too, that by this woman he had several children, and that on his death-bed he declared that he conscientiously regarded her as his wife, but that such had been his cowardliness, that he chose rather to confess adultery (concubinage) than what was then reckoned more criminal in an ecclesiastic—marriage.

It has been supposed that Skelton was curate of Trumpington near Cambridge<sup>1</sup> (celebrated as the scene of Chaucer's *Miller's Tale*.) because at the end of one of his smaller poems are the following words ;

" Auctore Skelton, rectore de Dis.  
Finis, &c. Apud Trumpinton scriptum<sup>2</sup> per Curatum ejus-

<sup>1</sup> " In the Edition of his Workes in 8vo. Lond. 1736, which I have, at p. 272 he mentions *Trumpinton*, and seems to have been *Curate* there, 5. Jan. 1507. At p. 54 he also mentions *Swafham* and *Soham*, 2 Towns in *Cambridgeshire*, in *The Crowne of Laurell*." Cole's *Collections*,—*Add. MSS.* (Brit. Mus.) 5880, p. 199. To conclude from the mention of these towns that Skelton resided in Cambridgeshire is the height of absurdity, as the reader will immediately perceive on turning to the passage in question, *Garlande of Laurell*, v. 1416, vol. ii. 232.—Chalmers, on the authority of a MS. note by Kennet, a transcript of which had been sent to him, states that " in 1512, Skelton was presented by Richard, abbot of Glastonbury, to the vicarage of Daltynge." *Biog. Dict.* xxviii. 45: if Chalmers had consulted Wood's account of the poet, he might have learned that the rector of Diss and the vicar of Daltynge were different persons.

<sup>2</sup> The old ed. has " scriptor."

dem, quinto die Januarii Anno Domini, secundum computat. Angliæ, MDVII." <sup>1</sup>

But the meaning evidently is, that the curate of Trumpington had written out the verses composed by the rector of Diss; and that the former had borrowed them from the latter for the purpose of transcription, is rendered probable by two lines which occur soon after among some minor pieces of our author;

"Hanc volo transcribas, transcriptam moxque remittas  
Pagellam; quia sunt qui mea scripta sciunt." <sup>2</sup>

Anthony Wood affirms that "at Disse and in the diocese" Skelton "was esteemed more fit for the stage than the pew or pulpit." <sup>3</sup> It is at least certain that anecdotes of the irregularity of his life, of his buffoonery as a preacher, &c. &c. were current long after his decease, and gave rise to that tissue of extravagant figments which was put together for the amusement of the vulgar, and entitled the *Merie Tales of Skelton*. <sup>4</sup>

Churchyard informs us that Skelton's "talke was as he wraet [wrote];" <sup>5</sup> and in this propen-

<sup>1</sup> vol. i. 198.

<sup>2</sup> vol. i. 196.

<sup>3</sup> *Ath. Oxon.* i. 50. ed. Bliss.

<sup>4</sup> Reprinted in Appendix I. to this Memoir; where see also the extracts from *A C mery Talys*, &c.—The biographer of Skelton, in *Eminent Lit. and Scient. Men of Great Britain*, &c. (Lardner's *Cyclop.*), asserts that "he composed his *Merie Tales for the king and nobles*" !!! i. 279.

<sup>5</sup> Lines prefixed to Marsha's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568; see Appendix I. to this Memoir.

sity to satire, as well in conversation as in writing, originated perhaps those quarrels with Garnesche, Barclay, Gaguin, and Lily, which I have now to notice.

As the four poems *Against Garnesche* were composed "by the kynges most noble commaundement," we may conclude that the monarch found amusement in the angry rhymes with which Skelton overwhelmed his opponent. Garnesche it appears, was the challenger in this contest;<sup>1</sup> and it is to be regretted that his verses have perished, because in all probability they would have thrown some light on the private history of Skelton. *The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedy*<sup>2</sup> bears a considerable resemblance to the verses against Garnesche; but the two Scottish poets are supposed to have carried on a sportive warfare of rude raillery, while a real animosity seems to have ex-

<sup>1</sup> "Sithe ye haue me chalyngyd, M[aster] Garnesche," &c.; see vol. i. 132.

<sup>2</sup> In the Notes on the poems *Against Garnesche* I have cited several parallel expressions from *The Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedy*. That curious production may be found in the valuable edition of Dunbar's *Poems* (ii. 65) by Mr. D. Laing, who supposes it to have been written between 1492 and 1497 (ii. 420.) It therefore preceded the "flyting" of Skelton and Garnesche. I may add, that the last portion of our author's *Speke, Parrot* bears a considerable resemblance to a copy of verses attributed to Dunbar, and entitled *A General Satyre* (*Poems*, ii. 24); and that as the great Scottish poet visited England more than once, it is probable that he and Skelton were personally acquainted.

isted between our author and his adversary.<sup>1</sup> At the time of this quarrel (the exact date of which cannot be determined) Christopher Garnesche was gentleman usher to Henry the Eighth, and dignified with knighthood;<sup>2</sup> and (if Skelton may be credited) had risen from the performance of very menial offices to the station which he then occupied. As he had no claims on the remembrance of posterity, little is known concerning him; but since we have evidence that his services were called for on more than one occasion of importance, he must have been a person of considerable note. He is twice incidentally mentioned in connection with the royal sisters of Henry the Eighth. In 1514, when the Princess Mary embarked for France, in order to join her decrepit bridegroom Louis the Twelfth, Garnesche formed one of the numerous retinue selected to attend her, and had an opportunity of particularly distinguishing himself during that perilous voyage: "The ii. daye of October at the hower of foure of the clocke in the morenyng thes fayre ladye tooke her ship with

<sup>1</sup> At a later period there was a poetical "flyting" between Churchyard and a person named Camel, who had attacked a publication of the former called *Davie Dicars Dreame*; and some other writers took a part in the controversy: these rare pieces (known only by their titles to Ritson, *Bibliog. Poet.* p. 151, and to Chalmers, *Life of Churchyard*, p. 53) are very dull and pointless, but were evidently put forth in earnest.

<sup>2</sup> In the first poem *Against Garnesche* he is called "*Master*:" but see Notes, vol. iii. 123.

all her noble compaignie; and when they had sayled a quarter of the see, the wynde rose and seuered some of the shyppes to Caley's, and some in Flaunders, and her shippe with greate difficultie was brought to Bulleyn, and with great ieopardy at the entryng of the haven, for the master ran the ship hard on shore, but the botes were redy and receyued this noble lady, and at the landyng *Sir Christopher Garnyshe* stode in the water, and toke her in his armes, and so caryed her to land, where the Duke of Vandosme and a Cardynall with many estates receyued her and her ladies,"<sup>1</sup> &c. Again, in a letter, dated Harbottle 18th Oct. 1515, from Lord Dacre of Gillesland and T. Magnus to Henry the Eighth, concerning the confinement in childbed of Margaret widow of James the Fourth, &c. we find; "*Sir Christofer Garneis* came to Morpeth immediatly vpon the queneis delyueraunce, and by our aduice hath contynued there with suche stuff as your grace hath sent to the said quene your suster till Sodaye laste paste, whiche daye he delyuered your letter and disclosed your credence, gretely to the quenes comforte. And for somiche as the quene lieth as yet in childe bedde, and shall kepe her chambre these thre wookes at the leiste, we haue aduise the said *sir Christofer Garneis* to remaine at Morpeth till the queneis comyng thid-

<sup>1</sup> Hall's *Chron.* (vi. yere Hen. viii.) fol. xlvi. ed. 1548.



der, and then her grace may order and prepare euery parte of the said stuf after her pleasure and as her grace semeth moste conuenient," &c.<sup>1</sup> A few particulars concerning Garnesche may be gleaned from the Books in the Public Record Office :

(Easter Term, 18 Hen. vii.) "*Cristofero*  
*Garneys* de regardo de denariis per Jo- } xl. li."  
 hannem Crawford et al. per manuc. for.<sup>2</sup> }

(i. e. in reward out of moneys forfeited by John Crawford and another upon bail-bond,)

(1st Henry viii.) "Item to *Cristofer Gar-*  
*nische* for the kinges offring at S. Ed- } vj. s. viij. d."  
 wardes shirynne the next day after the  
 Coronacion<sup>3</sup> }

(Easter Term, 1-2 Henry viii.) "*Cristofero*  
*Garneys* vni generosorum hostiariorum } x. li."  
 regis [one of the king's gentlemen-  
 ushers] de annuitate sua durante regis  
 beneplacito per annum }

*Eidem Cristofero* de feodo suo ad xx. li. } xx. li."  
 per annum pro termino vite sue<sup>4</sup> }

and we find that afterwards by letters patent dated 21st May, 7th Henry viii., in consideration of his services the king granted him an annuity of thirty

<sup>1</sup> *MS. Ott. Calig. B. vi. fol. 112.*

<sup>2</sup> *Auditor's Calendar of Files from 1485 to 1522, fol. 108 (b).*

<sup>3</sup> *Privy Purse Accounts, A. 5. 16. p. 21.*

<sup>4</sup> *Auditor's Calendar, &c. fol. 162 (b).*

pounds for life, payable half-yearly at the Exchequer.<sup>1</sup>

(11th Henry viii.) "Item to *Sir Christofer Garnisshe knight* upon a warraunt for the hyre of his howse at Grenewyche<sup>2</sup> at x. *li.* by the yere for one half a yere due at Ester last and so after half yerely during x yeres<sup>3</sup> } c. s."

(20th Henry viii.) "*Cristofero Garnyshe militis* de annuitate sua ad xxx l. per breve currens Rec. den. pro festo Michis ult. pret. viz. pro vno anno integro per manus Ricardi Alen<sup>4</sup> } xxx. *li.*"

see above: this entry is several times repeated, and occurs for the last time in 26th Henry viii.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Auditor's Patent Book*, No. 1. fol. 6 (b).

<sup>2</sup> In an account of the visit of the Emperor Charles the Fifth to England in June 1532, among the lodgings which were occupied on that occasion at Greenwich we find mention of "Master Garnyshe house." See *Rutland Papers*, p. 82, (printed for the Camden Society.) That a knight was frequently called "Master," I have shewn in Notes, vol. iii. 128.

<sup>3</sup> *Privy Purse Accounts*, A. 5, 17. p. 175.

<sup>4</sup> *Teller's Book*, A. 3. 24. p. 293.

<sup>5</sup> To these notices of Garnesche I may add the following letter, the original of which is in the possession of Mr. J. P. Collier:

"Pleas it your grace, We haue Receyned the Kyngs most graciously letres dated at his manour of grenwich the x<sup>th</sup> day of Aprill, Wherby we peroeuyne his high pleasour is that we shulde take some substanciall direccion for the preparacion and furnyshing of all maner of vitailles aswell for man as for horse, to bee had in Redynesse against the commying of his grace, his nobles with ther trayn; Like it your grace, so it is We haue not been in tymes past so greatly and sore destitute

## Bale mentions among the writings of Alexander

this many yeres past of all maner of vitailles both for man and beist as we be now, not oonly by reason of a gret murrin of cattall which hath ben in thies partes, but also for that the Kings takers, lieng about the borders of the see coste next adionying vnto vs, haue takyn and made provision therof contrarie to the olde ordnanunce, so that we be vtterly destitute by reason of the same, and can in no wise make any substanciall provision for his highnes nor his trayn in thies partes, for all the bochers in this toun haue not substance of beoffs and motones to serue vs, as we be accompanied at this day, for the space of iii wekes att the most. And also as now there is not within this toun of Calais fewell sufficient to serue vs oon hole weke, the which is the great daunger and vnsuretie of this the Kings toun. Wherefore we most humbly besuch your grace, the premisses considered, that we by your gracious and fauorable helpe may haue not oonly Remedy for our beiffs and motones with other vitailles, but also that all maner of vitaillers of this toun may repair and resorte with ther shippes from tyme to tyme to make ther purueyance of all maner of fewell from hensfurth for this toun oonly, without any let or Interrupcionn of the kings officers or takers, any commandment hertofore giffen to the contrarie not withstanding, for without that both the Kings Highnes, your grace, and all this toun shalbe vtterly disappoynted and disceyved both of vitailles and fewell, which god defend. At Calais the xviii<sup>th</sup> day of Aprill,

By your seruants,

John Peache,

Wyllym Sandys,

Edward Guldeferd,

Robert Wotton,

*Cristoffyr Garneys.*

To my Lorde cardynalls grace,

Legate a Latere and chancellor of England."

In *Proceed. and Ordin. of the Privy Council* (vol. vii. 188, 196), 1541, mention is made of a *Lady Garnish* (probably the widow of Sir Christopher) having had a house at Calais; and

Barclay a piece "against Skelton."<sup>1</sup> It has not come down to us; but the extant works of Barclay bear testimony to the hearty dislike with which he regarded our author. At the conclusion of *The Ship of Fools* is this contemptuous notice of one of Skelton's most celebrated poems;

"Holde me excused, for why my will is good  
Men to induce vnto vertue and goodnes;  
I write no ieste ne tale of Robin Hood,  
Nor sowe no sparkles ne sede of viciousnes;  
Wise men loue vertue, wilde people wantonnes,  
It longeth not to my science nor cunning,  
*For Philip the Sparrow the Dirige to singe:*"<sup>2</sup>

a sneer to which Skelton most probably alludes, when, enumerating his own productions in the *Garlande of Laurell*, he mentions,

"Of Phillip Sparow the lamentable fate,  
The dolefull desteny, and the carefull chaunce,  
Dynyed by Skelton after the funerall rate;  
*Yet sum there be therewith that take greuanunce,  
And grudge therat with frownyng countenance;*  
But what of that? hard it is to please all men;  
Who list amende it, let hym set to his penne."<sup>3</sup>

That a portion of the following passage in Bar-

in *Privy Purse Expenses of the Princess Mary* (p. 120) we find under June 1548, "Item my lady garnyssh seruaunt for bringing cherys xiiid."

<sup>1</sup> "Contra Skeltonum, Lib. i." *Script. Illust. Brit.* p. 723. ed. 1559.

<sup>2</sup> fol 259. ed. 1570.

<sup>3</sup> vol. ii. 225.

clay's *Fourth Egloge* was levelled at Skelton, appears highly probable ;

" Another thing yet is greatly more damnable:  
Of rascolde poetes yet is a shamfull rable,  
Which voyde of wisdomes presumeth to indite,  
Though they haue scantly the cunning of a snite;<sup>1</sup>  
And to what vices that princes mooste intende,  
Those dare these fooles solemnize and commende.  
Then is he decked as *Poete laureate*,  
When stinking Thais made him her graduate:  
When Muses rested, she did her season note,  
And she with Bacchus her camous<sup>2</sup> did promote.  
Such rascolde drames, promoted by Thais,  
Bacchus, Licoris, or yet by Testalis,  
Or by suche other newe forged Muses nine,  
Thinke in their mindes for to haue wit diuine;  
They laude their verses, they boast, they vaunt and iet,  
Though all their cunning be scantly worth a pet:  
If they haue smelled the artes triuiall,  
They count them Poetes hye and heroicall.  
Such is their folly, so foolishly they dote,  
Thinking that none can their playne error note:  
Yet be they foolishhe, auoyde of honestie,  
Nothing seasoned with spice of grauitie,  
Auoyde of pleasure, auoyde of eloquence,  
With many wordes, and fruitlesse of sentence;  
Unapt to learne, disdayning to be taught,  
Their priuate pleasure in snare hath them so caught;  
And worst yet of all, they count them excellent,  
Though they be fruitlesse, rashe and improvident.  
To such ambages who doth their minde incline,  
They count all other as priuate<sup>3</sup> of doctrine,  
And that the faultes which be in them alone,  
Also be common in other men eche one."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> i. e. snipe.

<sup>2</sup> See Notes, vol. iii. 97. If this line alludes to Skelton, it preserves a trait of his personal appearance.

<sup>3</sup> i. e. deprived, devoid.

<sup>4</sup> sig. c. v. ed. 1670.

In the *Garlande of Laurell* we are told by Skelton, that among the famous writers of all ages and nations, whom he beheld in his vision, was

"a frere of Fraunce men call *sir Gaguayne*,  
That frownyd on me full angerly and pale;" <sup>1</sup>

and in the catalogue of his own writings which is subsequently given in the same poem, he mentions a piece which he had composed against this personage,

"*The Recule ageinst Gaguayne* of the Frenshe nacyoun." <sup>2</sup>

Robert Gaguin was minister-general of the Matu-rines, and enjoyed great reputation for abilities and learning.<sup>3</sup> He wrote various works; the most important of which is his *Compendium supra Francorum gestis* from the time of Pharamond to the author's age. In 1490 he was sent by Charles the Eighth as ambassador to England, where he probably became personally acquainted with Skelton.

That Skelton composed certain Latin verses against the celebrated grammarian William Lily, we are informed by Bale,<sup>4</sup> who has preserved the initial words, viz.

"Urgeor impulsus tibi, Lilli, retundere:"

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii. 186.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. ii. 222.

<sup>3</sup> In a volume of various pieces by Gaguin, dated 1498, is a treatise on metre, which shews no mean acquaintance with the subject.

<sup>4</sup> "*Inuectivum in Guil. Liliū, Lib. i.*" *Script. Ilust. Brit.* &c. p. 652. ed. 1559. The reader must not suppose from the

and that Lily repaid our poet in kind, we have the following proff;

"*Lili Hendecasyllabi in Scheltonum ejus carmina calumniantem.*"<sup>1</sup>

"Quid me, Scheltone, fronte sic aperta  
Carpis, vipereo potens veneno?  
Quid versus trutina meos iniqua  
Libras? dicere vera num licebit?  
Doctrinæ tibi dum parare famam  
Et doctus fieri studes poeta,  
Doctrinam nec habes, nec es poeta."

It would seem that Skelton occasionally repented of the severity of his compositions, and longed to recall them; for in the *Garlande of Laurell*, after

description, "Lib. i.," that the invective in question extended to a volume: it was, I presume, no more than a copy of verses. Wood mentions that this piece was "written in verse and very carping." *Ath. Ox.* i. 52. ed. Bliss: but most probably he was acquainted with it only through Bale. He also informs us (i. 84) that Lily wrote a tract entitled

"*Apologia ad* { *Joh. Skeltonum.*  
                  { *Rob. Whittington.* " for a copy of which I have sought in vain.

<sup>1</sup> See Weever's *Fun. Monum.* p. 498. ed. 1681; Stowe's Collections, *MS. Harl.* 540. fol. 57; and Fuller's *Worthies*, (*Norfolk*), p. 257. ed. 1662. "And this," says Fuller, "I will do for W. Lilly, (though often beaten for his sake,) endeavour to translate his answer:

"With face so bold, and teeth so sharp,  
Of viper's venome, why dost carp?  
Why are my verses by thee weigh'd  
In a false scale? may truth be said?  
Whilst thou to get the more esteem  
A learned Poet fain wouldst seem,  
Skelton, thou art, let all men know it,  
Neither learned, nor a Poet."

many of them have been enumerated, we mete with the following curious passage ;

"Item *Apollo that whirllid vp his chare,*  
That made sum to snurre and snuf in the wynde ;  
It made them to skip, to stampe, and to stare,  
Whiche, if they be happy, haue cause to beware  
In ryming and raylyng with hym for to mell  
For drede that he lerne them there A, B, C, to spell.

With that I stode vp, halfe sodenly afrayd ;  
Supplyng to Fame, I besought her grace,  
*And that it wolde please her, full tenderly I prayd,*  
*Out of her bokis Apollo to rase.*

Nay, sir, she sayd, what so in this place  
Of our noble courte is ones spoken owte,  
It must nedes after rin all the worlde aboute.

*God wote, theis wordes made me full sad ;*  
And when that I sawe it wolde not better be,  
But that my peticyon wolde not be had,  
What shulde I do but take it in gre ?  
For, by Juppiter and his high mageste,  
*I did what I coude to scrape out the scrollis,*  
*Apollo to rase out of her ragman rollis."*<sup>1</sup>

The piece which commenced with the words "Apollo that whirllid vp his chare," and which gave such high displeasure to some of Skelton's contemporaries, has long ago perished,—in spite of Fame's refusal to erase it from her books !

The title-page of the *Garlande of Laurell*,<sup>2</sup> ed. 1523, sets forth that it was "studyously dyusysed at *Sheryfhotton Castell*," in Yorkshire ; and there seems no reason to doubt that it was written by Skelton during a residence at that mansion. The

<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii. 235.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. ii. 170.



date of its composition is unknown; but it was certainly produced at an advanced period of his life;<sup>1</sup> and the Countess of Surrey, who figures in it so conspicuously as his patroness, must have been Elizabeth Stafford, daughter of Edward Duke of Buckingham, second wife of Thomas Howard Earl of Surrey, and mother of that illustrious Surrey "whose fame for aye endures." Sheriff-Hutton Castle was then in the possession of her father-in-law, the Duke of Norfolk,<sup>2</sup> the victor of Flodden Field; and she was probably there as his guest, having brought Skelton in her train. Of this poem, unparalleled for its egotism, the greater part is allegorical; but the incident from which it derives its name,—the weaving of a garland for the author by a party of ladies, at the desire of the Countess, seems to have had some foundation in fact.

From a passage in the poem just mentioned, we may presume that Skelton used sometimes to reside at the ancient college of the Bonhommes at Ashridge;

"Of the Bonhomys of Ashrige besyde Barkamstede,  
That goodly place to Skelton moost kynde,  
Where the sank royall is, Crystes blode so rede,  
Wherupon he metrefyde after his mynde;  
A pleasaunter place than Ashrige is, harde were to  
fynde," &c.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See Notes, vol. iii. 325.

<sup>2</sup> It was granted to him by the king for life.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. ii. 235. Concerning this college, see Notes, vol. iii. 349.

That Skelton once enjoyed the patronage of Wolsey, at whose desire he occasionally exercised his pen, and from whose powerful influence he expected preferment in the church, we learn from the following passages in his works :

"Honorificatissimo, amplissimo, longeque reverendissimo in Christo patri, ac domino, domino Thomæ, &c. tituli sanctæ Ceciliæ, sacrosanctæ Romanæ ecclesiæ presbytero, Cardinali meritissimo, et apostolicæ sedis legato, a latereque legato superillustri, &c. Skeltonis laureatus, ora. reg., humillimum dicit obsequium cum omni debita reverentia, tanto tamque magnifico digna principe sacerdotum, totiusque justitiæ æqualissimo moderatore, necnon præsentis opusculi fautore excellentissimo, &c., ad cujus auspiciatissimam contemplationem, sub memorabili prelo gloriosæ immortalitatis, præsens pagella felicitatur, &c." <sup>1</sup>

"Ad serenissimam Majestatem Regiam, pariter cum Dominic Cardinali, Legato a latere honorificatissimo, &c.

*Lautre Enuoy.*

Perge, liber, celebrem pronus regem venerare  
Henricum octavum, resonans sua præmia laudis.  
Cardineum dominum pariter venerando salutes,  
Legatum a latere, et fiat memor ipse precare  
Prebendæ, quam promisit mihi credere quondam,  
Meque suum referas pignus sperare salutis  
Inter spemque metum.

---

<sup>1</sup> *A Replycation agaynst certayne yong scolers abiured of late*, &c. vol. i. 230. In *Typograph. Antiq.* ii. 539. ed. Dibdin, where the *Replycation* is described and quoted from Heber's copy, we are told that it has "a Latin address to Thomas — who [*sic*] he [Skelton] calls an excellent patron," &c. That the editor should have read the address without discovering that the said *Thomas* was Cardinal Wolsey, is truly marvellous.

Twene hope and drede  
 My lyfe I lede,  
 But of my spede  
     Small sekernes;  
 Howe be it I rede  
 Both worde and dede  
 Should be agrede  
     In noblenes:  
 Or els, &c." <sup>1</sup>

"To my Lorde Cardynals right noble grace, &c.

*Lenuoy.*

Go, lytell quayre, apace,  
 In moost humble wyse,  
 Before his noble grace,  
     That caused you to denise  
     This lytel enterprise;  
 And hym moost lowly pray,  
     In his mynde to comprise  
 Those wordes his grace dyd saye  
 Of an ammas gray.  
*Je foy enterment en sa bone grace."* <sup>2</sup>

We also find that Skelton "gaue to my lord Cardynall" *The Boke of Three Fooles*.<sup>3</sup>

What were the circumstances which afterwards alienated the poet from his powerful patron, cannot now be discovered: we only know that Skelton assailed the full-blown pride of Wolsey with a boldness which is astonishing, and with a fierce-

<sup>1</sup> *Garlande of Laurell*, vol. ii. 241.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. ii. 339. where this *Lenuoy* (which will be more particularly noticed presently) is appended to the poem *Howe the doury Duke of Albany*, &c.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. i. 221.

ness of invective which has seldom been surpassed. Perhaps it would have been better for the poet's memory, if the passages just quoted had never reached us ; but nothing unfavourable to his character ought to be hastily inferred from the alteration in his feelings towards Wolsey while the cause of their quarrel is buried in obscurity. The provocation must have been extraordinary, which transformed the humble client of the Cardinal into his "dearest foe."

We are told by Francis Thynne, that Wolsey was his father's "olde enymye, for manye causes, but mostly for that my father had furthered Skelton to publishe his *Collin Cloute* againste the Cardinall, the moste parte of whiche Booke was compiled in my father's howse at Erithe in Kente."<sup>1</sup> But though *Colyn Cloute* contains passages which manifestly point at Wolsey, it cannot be termed a piece "*againste the Cardinall*:" and I have no doubt that the poem which Thynne had in view, and which by mistake he has mentioned under a wrong title, was our author's *Why come ye nat to Courte*. In *Colyn Cloute* Skelton ventured to aim only a few shafts at Wolsey : in *Why come*

<sup>1</sup> *Animadversions vpon the annotacions and correctiōns of some imperfections of impressiōnes of Chauceers Workes*, &c. p. 13,—in Todd's *Illustr. of Gower and Chaucer*.

I may notice here, that among the *Harleian MSS.* (2252, fols. 156, 158) are two poems on the Cardinal, which in the Catalogue of that collection Wanley has described as "Skelton's libels;" but they are evidently not by him.

*ye nat to Courte*, and in *Speke, Parrot*, he let loose against him the full asperity of reproach.

The bull appointing Wolsey and Campeggio to be legates *a latere* jointly, is dated July 27th, 1518, that appointing Wolsey to be sole Legate *a latere* 10th June, 1519;<sup>1</sup> and from the first two passages which I have cited above (p. liii.) we ascertain the fact, that Wolsey continued to be the patron of Skelton for at least some time after he had been invested with the dignity of papal legate. If the third passage cited above (p. liv.) "Go lytell quayre, apace," &c. really belong to the poem *How the douty Duke of Albany*, &c. to which it is appended in Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568, our author must have been soliciting Wolsey for preferment as late as November 1523: but his most direct satire on the Cardinal, *Why come ye nat to Courte*, was evidently composed anterior to that period; and his *Speke, Parrot* (which would require the scolia of a Tzetzes to render it intelligible) contains seeming allusions to events of a still earlier date. The probability (or rather

<sup>1</sup> Wolsey had previously been named a Cardinal in 1515.—Fiddes (*Life of Wolsey*, p. 99. ed. 1726) says that he became Legate *a latere* in 1518: but see *State Papers* (1830,) i. 9 (note.) Lingard's *Hist. of Engl.* vi. 57. ed. 8vo, &c.—Hoping to ascertain the exact date of the *Replycacion*, &c. (which contains the first of the passages now under consideration,) I have consulted various books for some mention of the "young hereticks" against whom that piece was written; but without success.

certainly) is, that the L'Envoy, "Go, lytell quayre," &c. has no connexion with the poem on the Duke of Albany: in Marshe's volume the various pieces are thrown together without any attempt at arrangement; and it ought to be particularly noticed that between the poem against Albany and the L'Envoy in question, *another L'Envoy is interposed*.<sup>1</sup> Wolsey might have forgiven the allusions made to him in *Colyn Cloute*; but it would be absurd to imagine that, in 1523, he continued to patronize the man who had written *Why come ye nat to Courte*.

The following anecdote is subjoined from Hall: "And in this season [15 Henry viii.] the Cardinall by his power legantine dissolved the Conuocacion at Paules, called by the Archebishop of Cantorbury [Warham,] and called hym and all the clergie to his conuocacion to Westminster, which was neur seen before in Englande, wherof master Skelton, a mery Poet, wrote,

Gentle Paule, laie doune thy sward,<sup>2</sup>  
For Peter of Westminster hath shauen thy heard."<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> We cannot settle this point by a comparison of old editions, the poem against Albany and the two L'Envoys which follow it being extant only in the ed. of Marshe.—It may be doubted, too, if the L'Envoy which I have cited at p. liii. "*Perge, liber*," &c. belongs to the *Garlande of Laurell*, to which it is affixed in Marshe's edition as a *second* L'Envoy: in Faukes's edition of that poem, which I conceive to be the first that was printed, it is not found: the Cott. MS. of the *Garlande* is unfortunately imperfect at the end.

<sup>2</sup> i. e. sword.

<sup>3</sup> *Chron. (Hen. viii.) fol. cx. ed. 1548.*

From the vengeance of the Cardinal,<sup>1</sup> who had sent out officers to apprehend him, Skelton took sanctuary at Westminster, where he was kindly received and protected by the abbot Islip,<sup>2</sup> with

<sup>1</sup> "Ob literas quasdam in Cardinalem Vuolsium inuectivas, ad Vuestmonasteriense tandem asylum confugere, pro uita seruanda, coactus fuit: ubi nihilominus sub abbate Islepo fanorem inuenit." Bale, *Script. Illust. Brit.* p. 651. ed. 1559.—"Vbi licet Abbatis Islepi fauore protegeretur, tamen vitam ibi, quantumuis antea iucunde actam, tristi exitu concludit." Pits, *De Illust. Angl. Script.* p. 701. ed. 1619.—"But Cardinal Wolsey (*impar congressus*, betwixt a poor Poet and so potent a Prelate) being inveighed against by his pen, and charged with too much truth, so persecuted him, that he was forced to take Sanctuary at Westminster, where Abbot Islip used him with much respect," &c. Fuller's *Worthies*, (*Norfolk*), p. 267. ed. 1662.—"He [Skelton] was so closely pursued by his [Wolsey's] officers, that he was forced to take sanctuary at Westminster, where he was kindly entertained by John Islipp the abbat, and continued there to the time of his death." Wood's *Ath. Oxon.* i. 51. ed. Bliss, who adds in a note; "The original MS. register of this sanctuary, which must have been a great curiosity, was in Sir Henry Spelman's library, and was purchased at the sale of that collection by Wanley for Lord Weymouth. MS. note in Wanley's copy of Nicholson's *Historical Library* in the Bodleian."

<sup>2</sup> John Islip was elected abbot in 1500, and died in 1532. see Widmore's *Hist. of West. Abbey*, 119, 123. "John Skelton . . . is said by the late learned Bishop of Derry, Nicholson (*Hist. Lib.* chap. 2.) to have first collected the Epitaphs of our Kings, Princes, and Nobles, that lie buried at the Abbey Church of Westminster: but I apprehend this to be no otherwise true, than that, when he, to avoid the anger of Cardinal Wolsey, had taken sanctuary at Westminster, to recommend himself to Islip, the Abbot at that time, he made some copies of verses to the memories of King Henry the

whom he had been long acquainted. In this asylum he appears to have remained till his death, which happened June 21st, 1529. What he is reported to have declared on his death-bed concerning the woman whom he had secretly married, and by whom he left several children, has been already mentioned :<sup>1</sup> he is said also to have uttered at the same time a prophecy concerning the downfall of Wolsey.<sup>2</sup> He was buried in the chancel of the neighbouring church of St. Margaret's ;

Seventh and his Queen, and his mother the Countess of Richmond, and perhaps some other persons buried in this church." *Account of Writers*, &c. p. 5, appended to Widmore's *Enquiry into the time of the found. of West. Abbey*.—Widmore is mistaken: neither in Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1668, nor in the *Reges, Regina, Nobiles*, &c., 1608, is there any copy of verses by our author on the *Queen of Henry the Seventh*: see in vol. i. 198, 199, 217, the three pieces which I have given from those sources: two of them at least were composed before the poet had sought refuge at Westminster, for one (written at Islip's request) is dated 1512, and another, 1516: the third has no date.

<sup>1</sup> See p. xxxix.

<sup>2</sup> "De morte Cardinalis uaticinium edidit: & eius ueritatem euentus declarauit." Bale, *Script. Illust. Brit.* p. 652. ed. 1559.—"The word *Vates* being Poet or Prophet, minds me of this dying Skeltons prediction, foretelling the ruine of Cardinal Wolsey. Surely, one unskilled in prophecies, if well versed in Solomons Proverbs, might have prognosticated as much, that *Pride goeth before a fall*." Fuller's *Worthies*, *Norfolk*,) p. 257. ed. 1662.—Did not this anecdote originate in certain verses of *Colyn Cloute*? See the fragment from *Lansdown MSS.* vol. ii. 141, note.



and, soon after, this inscription was placed over his grave,

*Joannes Skeltonus, vates Pierius, hic situs est.*<sup>1</sup>

Concerning the personal appearance of Skelton we are left in ignorance ; <sup>2</sup> for the portraits which are prefixed to the old editions of several of his poems must certainly not be received as authentic representations of the author.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Vuestmonasterii tandem, captiuitatis suæ tempore, mortuus est: & in D. Margaritæ sacello sepultus, cum hac inscriptione alabastrica: Johannes Skeltonus, uates Pierius, hic situs est. Animam egit 21 die Junii, anno Dñi 1529, relictis liberis." Bale, *Script. Illust. Brit.* p. 652. ed. 1559. See also Pits (*De Illust. Angl. Script.* p. 708. ed. 1619) and Fuller (*Worthies, Norfolk*, p. 257. ed. 1662,) who give *Joannes Skeltonus vates Pierius hic situs est* as the whole of Skelton's epitaph. Weever, however (*Fun. Monum.* p. 497. ed. 1681,) makes "*animam egit, 21 Junii 1529*" a portion of it, and in a marginal note substitutes "ejicit" for "*egit*," as if correcting the Latinity!! So too Wood (*Ath. Oxon.* i. 52. ed. Bliss.) who places "ejicit" between brackets after "*egit*," and states (what the other writers do not mention) that the inscription was put on the tomb "soon after" Skelton's death.

In the *Church-Wardens Accounts of St. Margaret's, Westminster* (Nichols's *Illustr. of Manners and Expences*, &c. 4to. p. 9,) we find this entry;

£. s. d.  
"1529. Item, of Mr. Skelton for viii tapers . . 0 2 8"

The institution of the person who succeeded Skelton as rector of Diss is dated 17th July: see first note on the present Memoir.

<sup>2</sup> See note, p. xlviii.

<sup>3</sup> e. g. the portrait on the title-page of *Dyvers Balettyes and Dyties solacyous* (evidently from the press of Pynson; see Appendix II. to this Memoir) is given as a portrait of "Doctor

The chief satirical productions of Skelton (and the bent of his genius was decidedly towards satire) are *The Bowge of Courte*, *Colyn Cloute*, and *Why come ye nat to Courte*.—In the first of these, an allegorical poem of considerable invention, he introduces a series of characters delineated with a boldness and discrimination which no preceding poet had displayed since the days of Chaucer, and which none of his contemporaries (with the sole exception of the brilliant Dunbar) were able to attain : the merit of those personifications has been allowed even by Warton, whose ample critique on Skelton deals but little in praise;<sup>1</sup> and I am somewhat surprised that Mr. D'Israeli, who has lately come forward as the warm eulogist of our author,<sup>2</sup> should have passed over *The Bowge of Courte* without the slightest notice.—*Colyn Cloute*

Boorde" in the *Boke of Knowledge* (see reprint, sig. I); and (as Mr. F. R. Atkinson of Manchester obligingly informed me by letter some years ago) the strange fantastic figure on the reverse of the title-page of Faukes's ed. of the *Garlande of Laurell*, 1523 (poorly imitated in *The Brit. Bibliogr.* iv. 389) is a copy of an early French print.

<sup>1</sup> "Warton has undervalued him [Skelton]; which is the more remarkable, because Warton was a generous as well as a competent critic. He seems to have been disgusted with buffooneries, which, like those of Rabelais, were thrown out as a tub for the whale; for unless Skelton had written thus for the coarsest palates, he could not have poured forth his bitter and undaunted satire in such perilous times." Southey, *Select Works of Brit. Poets*, (1881,) p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> *Amen. of Lit.* ii. 69.

is a general satire on the corruptions of the Church, the friars and the bishops being attacked alike unsparingly ; nor, when Skelton himself pronounced of this piece that " though his ryme be ragged, it hath in it some pyth,"<sup>1</sup> did he overrate its vigour and its weighty truth : *Colyn Cloute* not only shews that fearlessness which on all occasions distinguished him, but evinces a superiority to the prejudices of his age, in assailing abuses, which, if manifest to his more enlightened contemporaries, few at least had as yet presumed to censure.—In *Why come ye nat to Courte* the satire is entirely personal, and aimed at the all-powerful minister to whom the author had once humbly sued for preferment. While throughout this remarkable poem, Skelton either overlooks or denies the better qualities, the commanding talents, and the great attainments of Wolsey, and even ungenerously taunts him with the meanness of his origin ; he fails not to attack his character and conduct in those particulars against which a satirist might justly declaim, and with the certainty that invectives so directed would find an echo among the people. The regal pomp and luxury of the Cardinal, his insatiate ambition, his insolent bearing at the council-board, his inaccessibility to suitors, &c. &c. are dwelt on with an intensity of scornful bitterness, and occasionally give rise to vivid descriptions which

history assures us are but little exaggerated. Some readers may perhaps object, that in this poem the satire of Skelton too much resembles the "oyster-knife that hacks and hews," to which that of Pope was so unfairly likened<sup>1</sup> ; but all must confess that he wields his weapon with prodigious force and skill ; and we know that Wolsey writhed under the wounds which it inflicted.

When Catullus bewailed the death of Lesbia's bird, he confined himself to eighteen lines and truly golden lines ; but Skelton, while lamenting for the sparrow that was "slayn at Carowe," has engrafted on the subject so many far-sought and whimsical embellishments, that his epicede is really what the old editions term it,—“a boke.” *Phyllyp Sparowe* exhibits such fertility and delicacy of fancy, such graceful sportiveness, and such ease of expression, that it might well be characterized by Coleridge as “an exquisite and original poem.”<sup>2</sup>

In *The Tunnyng of Elynour Rummyng*, which would seem to have been one of Skelton's most popular performances, we have a specimen of his

<sup>1</sup> “Satire should, like a polish'd razor, keen,  
Wound with a touch that's scarcely felt or seen:  
*Thine is an oyster-knife that hacks and hews,*” &c.

*Verses addressed to the imitator of the First Satire  
of the Second Book of Horace* (the joint composition  
of Lord Hervey and Lady M. W. Montagu.)

<sup>2</sup> *Remains*, ii. 168.

talent for the low burlesque ;—a description of a real ale-wife, and of the various gossips who keep thronging to her for liquor, as if under the influence of a spell. If few compositions of the kind have more coarseness or extravagance, there are few which have greater animation or a richer humour.

The *Garlande of Laurell*, one of Skelton's longest and most elaborate pieces, cannot also be reckoned among his best. It contains, however, several passages of no mean beauty, which shew that he possessed powers for the higher kind of poetry, if he had chosen to exercise them ; and is interspersed with some lyrical addresses to the ladies who weave his chaplet, which are very happily versified. In one respect the *Garlande of Laurell* stands without a parallel : the history of literature affords no second example of a poet having deliberately written sixteen hundred lines in honour of himself.

Skelton is to be regarded as one of the fathers of the English drama. His *Enterlude of Vertue*<sup>1</sup> and his *Comedy callyd Achademios*<sup>2</sup> have perished : so perhaps has his *Nigramansir* ;<sup>3</sup> but his

<sup>1</sup> " *Of Vertu also the souerayne enterlude.*"

*Garlande of Laurell*, vol. ii. 221.

<sup>2</sup> " *His comedy, Achademios callyd by name.*" *Id.* p. 222.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix II. to this Memoir.—Mr. Collier is mistaken in supposing Skelton's "paiauntis that were played in Ioyows Garde" to have been dramatic compositions: see Notes, vol. iii. 344.

*Magnifycence* is still extant. To those who carry their acquaintance with our early play-wrights no farther back than the period of Peele, Greene, and Marlowe, this "goodly interlude" by Skelton will doubtless appear heavy and inartificial: its superiority, however, to the similar efforts of his contemporaries, is, I apprehend, unquestionable.<sup>1</sup>

If our author did not invent the metre which he uses in the greater portion of his writings, and which is now known by the name *Skeltonical*, he was certainly the first who adopted it in poems of any length; and he employed it with a skill, which, after he had rendered it popular, was beyond the reach of his numerous imitators.<sup>2</sup> "The Skeltonical short verse," observes Mr. D'Israeli, speaking of Skelton's own productions, "contracted into five or six, and even four syllables, is wild and airy. In the quick returning rhymes, the playfulness of the diction, and the pungency of new words, usually ludicrous, often expressive, and sometimes felicitous, there is a stirring spirit which will be best felt in an audible reading. The velocity of his verse has a carol of its own. The

<sup>1</sup> A writer, of whose stupendous ignorance a specimen has been already cited (p. xl, note 4,) informs us that *Magnifycence* "is one of the dullest plays in our language." *Eminent Lit. and Scient. Men of Great Britain, &c.* (Lardner's *Cyclop.*) i. 281.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix III. to this Memoir, and *Poems attributed to Skelton*, vol. ii. 345.

chimes ring in the ear, and the thoughts are flung about like coruscations.”<sup>1</sup>

Skelton has been frequently termed a Macaronic poet, but it may be doubted if with strict propriety; for the passages in which he introduces snatches of Latin and French are thinly scattered through his works. “This anomalous and motley mode of versification,” says Warton, “is I believe supposed to be peculiar to our author. I am not, however, quite certain that it originated with Skelton.”<sup>2</sup> He ought to have been “quite certain” that it did *not*.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Amen. of Lit.* ii. 69.

<sup>2</sup> *Hist. of E. P.* ii. 356.

<sup>3</sup> “In hevyn blyse ye xalle wyn to be  
Amonge the blyssyd company *omnium supernorum*  
Ther as is alle merth joye and glee  
*Inter agmina angelorum*  
In blyse to abyde.”  
*Coventry Mysteries*,—*MS. Cott. Vesp. D.* viii. fol. 112.

A reprint of Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes* having appeared in 1786, Pope took occasion, during the next year, to mention them in the following terms,—casting a blight on our poet's reputation, from which it has hardly yet recovered;

“Chaucer's worst ribaldry is learn'd by rote,  
And beastly Skelton Heads of Houses quote”—

Note—“Skelton, Poet Laureat to Hen. 8. a Volume of whose Verses has been lately reprinted, consisting almost wholly of Ribaldry, Obscenity, and Billingsgate Language.” *The First Epistle of the Second Book of Horace imitated*, 1787. But Pope was unjust to Skelton; for, though expressions of decided grossness occur in his writings, *they are comparatively*

*few*; and during his own time, so far were such expressions from being regarded as offensive to decency, that in all probability his royal pupil would not have scrupled to employ them in the presence of Anne Bulleyn and her maids of honour.

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ADDITIONAL NOTES.

P. xxvii. The following verses are transcribed from a MS. (in the collection of the late Mr. B. H. Bright,) consisting of *Hymni, &c.*, by Picus Mirandula:—

*"Picus Mirandula Carmen Extemporale.*

Quid tibi facundum nostra in præconia fontem  
Solvere collibuit,  
Æterna vates, Skelton, dignissime lauro,  
Castalidumque decus?  
Nos neque Pieridum celebramus antra sororum,  
Fonte nec Aonio  
Ebibimus vatum ditantes ora liquores.  
At tibi Apollo chelym [*sic*]  
Auratam dedit, et vocalia plectra sorores;  
Inque tuis labiis  
Dulcior Hyblæo residet suadela liquore:  
Se tibi Calliope  
Infudit totam: tu carmine vincis olorem;  
Cedit et ipse tibi  
Ultro porrecta cithara Rhodopeius Orpheus:  
Tu modulante lyra  
Et mulcere feras et duras ducere quercus,  
Tu potes et rapidos  
Flexanimis fidibus fluviorum sistere cursus;  
Flectere saxa potes.  
Græcia Mæonio quantum debebat Homero,  
Mantua Virgilio,  
Tantum Skeltoni jam se debere fatetur  
Terra Britanna suo:  
Primus in hanc Latio deduxit ab orbe Camenas;  
Primus hic edocuit



Exulte pureque loqui: te principe, Skelton,  
Anglia nil metuat  
Vel cum Romanis versa certare poetis.  
Vive valeque diu!"

P. xlv. To my notices of Garnesche add the following, (collected by Mr. D. E. Davy) from *Gent. Mag.* for Sept. 1844, p. 229:—

"Sir Christopher Garneys, knt., whom I suppose to be the person who was the object of Skelton's satire, was the second son of Edmund Garneys, esq. of Beccles, who was the second son of Peter Garneys, esq. of Beccles, whose eldest son, Thomas, was of Kenton. He, 'Sir Christopher,' was janitor of Caleys, and often employed in the wars temp. H. viii. . .

In a window of the chapel in the north aisle of St. Peter's Mancroft Church, Norfolk, was the following inscription: ' . . . anda . a . . Dei, pro animabus Thome Elys tercia vice hujus civitatis Norwici Majoris et Margarete consortis sue. — Orandumque est pro animabus Edmundi Garnysh armigeri, et Matilde ejus consortis, filie predictorum Thome Elis et Margarete, ac pro longo statu Christopheri Garnysh militis, dicti serenissimi Principis ville sue Calisie Janitoris.' See Blomf. Norf. vol. iv. p. 199. [vol. ii. 628. ed. fol.]

'A description of the Standards borne in the field by Peers and Knights in the reign of Hen. Eighth, from a MS. in the College of Arms marked I. 2. Compiled between the years 1610 and 1625.'—Syr Christoffer Garnys. 'A on a wreath, Argent & Gules, an arm erased below the elbow, and erect proper, holding a falchion Argent, pomel and hilt Or, the blade imbrued in 3 places Gules. (Imperfect.)—Arms. Argent a chevron Azure between 8 escallops Sable.' *Excerpta Historica*, p. 817.

'Standards, temp. H. viii. Harl. MS. 4632. Syr Xr'offer Garneyshe. Blue. The device, on a wreath Argent and Gules, an arm erased, grasping a scymitar, Proper.—Motto, "Oublere ne dois." Collect. Topog. vol. iii. p. 64.

'The names of the Englishmen which were sent in Ambassade to the French King, before the Qwenes Landing, and oder Gentilmen in their Compaigne.'—'Sir Christopher Garneys' (inter al.).—Leland's Collect. vol. ii. p. 704.

In the *Athenæum* for July 18, 1840, p. 572, there is a long letter, dated 'at Morpeth, the xxviij day of Decembre,' and signed 'C. Garneys,' whom the editor supposes to have been one of the medical attendants sent by the King, upon the illness of Queen Margaret: it was more probably [certainly, see p. xliii.] Sir Christ. Garneys, knt.

Sir Christopher was knighted at Touraine, 25 Dec., 5 H. viii. 1513, and married Jane, daughter of . . . . She died 27th March, 1552. Her will was dated 27th Aug. 1550, and proved 12th May, 1552; she was buried at Greenwich. Her husband was dead when she made her will. She names her son, Arthur Dymoke, esq. Bequeathes most of her personal estate for charitable purposes."



## **APPENDIX I.**

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### **MERIE TALES OF SKELTON**

**( see Memoir, p. xl. );**

**AND NOTICES OF SKELTON FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.**

**MERIE TALES**  
Newly Imprinted  
& made by Ma-  
ster Skelton  
Poet  
Laureat.

¶ Imprinted at London  
in Fleetstreet beneath the  
Conduit at the signe of S.  
John Euangelist,  
by Thomas  
Colwell.  
[12<sup>mo</sup>. n. d.]

Here begynneth certayne  
merye tales of Skelton,  
Poet Lauriat.

¶ How Skelton came late home to Oxford from Abington. Tale i.

SKELTON was an Englysheman borne as Skogyn was, and hee was educated & broughte vp in Oxfoorde: and there was he made a poete lauriat. And on a tyme he had ben at Abington to make mery, wher that he had eate salte meates, and hee did com late home to Oxforde, and he did lye in an ine named y<sup>e</sup> Tabere whyche is now the Angell, and hee dyd drynke, & went to bed. About midnight he was so thyrstie or drye that hee was constrained to call to the tapster for drynke, & the tapster harde him not. Then hee cryed to hys oste & hys osten, and to the ostler, for drinke; and no man wold here hym: alacke, sayd Skelton, I shall peryshe for lacke of drynke! what reamedye? At the last he dyd crie out and sayd, Fyer, fyer, fyer! When Skelton hard euery man bustled hymselfe vpward, & some of them were naked, & some were halfe asleepe and amased, and Skelton dyd crye, Fier, fier, styll, that euerye man knewe not whether to resort; Skelton did go to bed, and the oste and ostis, & the tapster with the ostler, dyd runne to Skeltons chamber with candles lyghted in theyr handes, saying, Where, where, where is the fyer? Here, here, here, said Skelton, & poynted hys fynger to hys mooouth, saying, Fetch me some drynke to quenche the fyer and the heate and the drinesse in my mouthe: & so they dyd. Wherefore it is good for euerye man to helpe hys owne selfe in tyme of neede wythe some policie or crafte, so bee it there bee no deceit nor falshed vsed.

¶ How Skelton drest the Kendallman in the sweat time. [Tale ii.]

On a time Skelton rode from Oxforde to London with a Kendalman, and at Uxbridge they beyted. The Kendallman layd hys cap vpon the borde in the hall, and he went to serue hys horse. Skelton tooke y<sup>e</sup> Kendalmans cappe, and dyd put betwixte the linyng & the vtter syde a dishe of butter: and when the Kendalman had drest hys horse, hee dyd come in to diner, and dyd put on hys cappe (that tyme the sweating sycknes was in all Englande); at the last, when the butter had take heate of the Kendalmans heade, it dyd begynne to run ouer hys face and aboute hys cheekes. Skelton sayde, Syr, you sweate soore: beware y<sup>e</sup> you haue not the sweating sycknesse. The Kendalman sayde, By the mysse, Ie wrang; I bus goe tyll bed. Skelton sayd, I am skild on phisicke, & specially in the sweating sycknesse, that I wyll warant any man. In gewd faith, saith the Kendallman, do see, and Ie bay for your skott to London. Then sayde Skelton, Get you a kerchiefe, and I wyll bryng you abed: the whiche was donne. Skelton caused the capp to bee sod in hoat lee, & dryed it: in the mornyng Skelton and the Kendalman dyd ride merely to London.

¶ Howe Skelton tolde the man that Chryst was very busye in the woodes with them that made fagots. Tale iii.

When Skelton did cum to London, ther were manye men at the table at diner. Amongest all other there was one sayde to Skelton, Be you of Oxforde or of Cambridge a scoler? Skelton sayd, I am of Oxford. Syr, sayde the man, I will put you a question: you do know wel that after Christ dyd rise from death to life, it was xl. days after ere he dyd ascend into heauen, and hee was but certayne times wyth hys discyples, and when that he did appeare to them, hee dyd neuer tary longe amongst them, but sodainely vanished from them; I wold fayne know (saith the man to Skelton) where Chryste was all these xl. dayes. Where hee was, saythe Skelton, God knoweth; he was verye busye in the woodes

among hys labourers, that dyd make fagottes to burne heretikes, & such as thou art the whych doest aske such diffuse questions: but nowe I wyll tell thee more; when hee was not with hys mother & hys disciples, hee was in Paradyce, to comforte the holye patriarches and prophets soules, the which before he had fet out of hell. And at the daye of hys ascencion, hee tooke them all vp wyth him into heauen.

¶ Howe the Welshman dyd desyre Skelton to ayde hym in hys sute to the kyngs for a patent to sell drynke. The liii. Tale.

Skelton, when he was in London, went to the kynges courte, where there did come to hym a Welshman, saying, Syr, it is so, that manye dooth come vpp of my country to the kyngs court, and some doth get of the kyng by patent a castell, and some a parke, & some a forest, and some one fee and some another, and they dooe lyue lyke honest men; and I shoulde lyue as honestly as the best, if I myght haue a patyne for good dryncke: wherefore I dooe praye you to write a fewe woords for mee in a lytle byll to geue the same to the kynges handes, and I wil geue you well for your laboure. I am contented, sayde Skelton. Syt downe then, sayde the Welshman, and write. What shall I wryte? sayde Skelton. The Welshman sayde, Wryte dryncke. Nowe, sayd the Welshman, wryte, more dryncke. What now? sayde Skelton. Wryte nowe, a great deale of dryncke. Nowe, sayd the Welshman, putte to all thys dryncke a littell crome of breade, and a great deale of drynke to it, and reade once agayne. Skelton dyd reade, Dryncke, more dryncke, & a great deale of dryncke, and a lytle crome of breade, and a great deale of dryncke to it. Then the Welshman sayde, Put out the litle crome of breade, and sett in, all dryncke, and no breade: and if I myght haue thys sygned of the kyng, sayde the Welshman, I care for no more as longe as I dooe lyue. Well then, sayde Skelton, when you haue thys signed of the kyng, then will I labour for a patent to haue bread, that you wyth your drynke, and I with the bread, may fare well, and seeke our liuinge with bagge and staffe.



¶ Of Swanborne the knaue, that was buried vnder St Peters wall  
in Oxford. [Tale v.]

There was dwelling in Oxford a stark knaue, whose name was Swanborn; and he was such a notable knaue that, if any scooler had fallen out thone wyth thother, the one woulde call thother Swanborn, the whyche they dyd take for a worser woorde than knaue. Hys wife woulde diuers tymes in the weeke kinbe his head with a iii. footed stoole: then hee woulde runne out of the doores wepinge, and if anye man had asked hym what he dyd alle, other whyle he woulde saye hee had the megrym in hys head, or ells, there was a great smoke wythin the house: & if the doores were shut, hys wyfe woulde beate him vnder the bed, or into the bench hole, and then he woulde looke out at the cat hole; then woulde his wife saye, Lookest thou out, whoreson? Yes, woulde he saye, thou shalt neuer let me of my manly lookes. Then with her distaff she woulde poore in at hym. I knewe him when that he was a boye in Oxforde; hee was a littell olde fellowe, and woulde lye as fast as a horse woulde trotte. At last hee dyed, and was buried vnder the wall of S. Peters church. Then Skelton was desyred to make an epitaphe vpon the church wall, and dyd wryte wyth a role, saying, Belsabub his soule saue, *Qui iacet hic hec* a knaue: *Jam scio*<sup>1</sup> *mortuus est, Et iacet hic hec* a beast: *Sepultus*<sup>2</sup> *est* amonge the weedes: God forgiue him his misdeedes!

¶ Howe Skelton was complayned on to the bishop of Norwich  
Tale vi.

Skelton dyd keepe a musket at Dys, vpon the which he was complayned on to the bishop of Norwych. The byshoppe

<sup>1</sup> *scio*] Old ed. "sci."

<sup>2</sup> *Sepultus*] Old ed. "Sepuitus."—This epitaph is made up from portions of Skelton's verses on John Clarke and Adam Uddersal: see vol. i. 188, 192.

sent for Skelton. Skelton dyd take two capons, to geue theym for a presente to the byshop. And as soone as hee had saluted the byshopp, hee sayde, My lorde, here I haue brought you a couple of capons. The byshop was blynde, and sayde, Who bee you? I am Skelton, sayd Skelton. The byshop sayd, A hoare head! I will none of thy capons: thou keep-est vnhappye rule in thy house, for the whyche thou shalt be punished. What, sayde Skelton, is the winde at that doore? and sayd, God be with you, my lorde! and Skelton with his capons went hys way. The byshop sent after Skelton to come agayne. Skelton sayde, What, shal I come<sup>1</sup> agayne to speake wythe a madde man? At last hee retourned to the byshop, whyche sayde to hym, I would, sayd the byshop, that you shoulde not lyue suche a sclaunderouse lyfe, that all your parisshes shoulde not wonder & complaine on you as they dooe: I pray you amende, and hereafter lyue honestlye, that I heare no more suche woordes of you; and if you wyll tarye dynner, you shall be welcome; and I thanke you, sayde the byshoppe, for your capons. Skelton sayde, My lord, my capons haue proper names; the one is named Alpha, the other is named Omega: my lorde, sayd Skelton, this capon is named Alpha, thys is the fyrst capon that I dyd euer geue to you; and this capon is named Omega, and this is the last capon that euer I wil gine you: & so fare you well, sayd Skelton.

¶ Howe Skelton, when hee came from the bishop, made a sermon.  
Tale vii.

Skelton the nexte Sondaye after wente into the pulpet to preach, and sayde, *Vos estis, vos estis*, that is to saye, You be, you be. And what be you? sayd Skelton: I saye, that you bee a sorte of knaues, yea, and a man might saye worse then knaues; and why, I shall shew you. You haue complayned of mee to the bysop that I doo keepe a fayre wench in my house: I dooe tell you, if you had any fayre wiues, it were some what to helpe me at neede; I am a man as you be: you

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<sup>1</sup> *shal I come*] Old ed. "*shall I come*."

haue foule wyues, and I haue a faire wenche, of the whyche I haue begotten a fayre boye, as I doe thinke, and as you all shall see. Thou wyfe, sayde Skelton, that hast my childe, be not afraid; bring me hither my childe to me: the whyche was doone. And he, shewynge his childe naked to all the parishe, sayde, How saye you, neibours all? is not this child as fayre as is the beste of all yours? It hath nose, eyes, handes, and feete, as well as any of your: it is not lyke a pygge, nor a calfe, nor like no foule nor no monstrous beast. If I had, sayde Skelton, broughte forthe thys chylde without armes or legges, or that it wer deformed, being a monstrous thyng, I woulde neuer haue blamed you to haue complayned to the bishop of me; but to complain without a cause, I say, as I said before in my antethem, *vos estis*, you be, and haue be, & wyll and shall be knaues, to complayne of me wythout a cause resonable. For you be presumptuous, & dooe exalte yourselues, and therefore you shall be made low: as I shall shewe you a famyller example of a parish priest, the whyche dyd make a sermon in Rome. And he dyd take that for hys antethem, the which of late dayes is named a theme, and sayde, *Qui se exallat humiliabitur, et qui se<sup>1</sup> humiliat exaltabitur*, that is to say, he that doth exalte himselfe or dothe extoll hymselfe shalbe made meke, & he that doth humble hymselfe or is meke, shalbe exalted, extoulled, or eleuated, or sublimated, or such lyke: and that I will shewe you by this my cap. This cappe was fyrate my hooide, when that I was studente in Jucalico, & then it was so proude that it woulde not bee contented, but it woulde slippe and fall from my shoulders. I perceyunge thys that he was proude, what then dyd I? shortly to conclude, I dyd make of hym a payre of breches to my hose, to brynge hym lowe. And when that I dyd see, knowe, or perceyue that he was in that case, and allmoste worne cleane oute, what dyd I then to extoll hym vppe agayne? you all may see that this my cap was made of it that was my breches. Therefore, sayde Skelton, *vos estis*,

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<sup>1</sup> *Qui se exallat humiliabitur, et qui se*] Old ed. "*Que se exallat humiliabitur, et que*se."

therefore you bee, as I dyd saye before: if that you exalte yourselfe, and cannot be contented that I haue my wenche still, some of you shall weare hornes; and therefore *vos estis*: and so farewell. It is merye in the hall, when beardes wagge all.

¶ How the fryer asked leaue of Skelton to preach at Dys, which Skelton wold not grant. Tale viii.

There was a fryer y<sup>e</sup> whych dydde come to Skelton to haue licence to preach at Dys. What woulde you preache there? sayde Skelton: dooe not you thynke that I am sufficiente to preache there in myne owne cure? Syr, sayde the freere, I am the limyter of Norwych, and once a yeare one of our place dothe vse to preache wyth you, to take the deuocion of the people; and if I may haue yoor good wil, so bee it, or els I will come and preach against your will, by the authoritie of the byshope of Rome, for I haue hys bulles to preache in euerye place, and therefore I wyll be there on Sondaye nexte cummyng. Come not there, freere, I dooe counsell thee, sayd Skelton. The Sundaye nexte followynge Skelton layde watch for the comynge of the frere: and as sone as Skelton had knowledge of the freere, he went into the pulpet to preache. At last the freere dyd come into the churche with the bishoppe of Romes bulles in hys hande. Skelton then sayd to all hys parishe, See, see, see, and poynted to thee fryere. All the parish gased on the frere. Then sayde Skelton, Maisters, here is as wonderfull a thyng as euer was seene: you all dooe knowe that it is a thyng daylye seene, a bulle dothe begette a calfe; but here, contrarye to all nature, a calfe hath gotten a bulle; for thys fryere, beeynge a calfe, hath gotten a bulle of the byshoppe of Rome. The fryere, beyng ashamed, woulde neuer after that time presume to preach at Dys.

¶ How Skelton handled the fryer that woulde needes lye with him in his inne. Tale ix.

As Skelton ryd into y<sup>e</sup> countre, there was a frere that hap-

ened in at an alehouse wheras Skelton was lodged, and there the frere dyd desire to haue lodgyng. The alewife sayd, Syr, I haue but one bed whereas master Skelton doth lye. Syr, sayd the frere, I pray you that I maye lye with you. Skelton said, Master freere, I doo vse to haue no man to lye with me. Syr, sayd the frere, I haue lyne with as good men as you, and for my money I doo looke to haue lodgyng as well as you. Well, sayde Skelton, I dooe see than that you wyll lye with me. Yea, syr, sayd the frere. Skelton did fill all the cuppes in the house, and whittled the frere, that at the last, the frere was in myne eames peason. Then sayde Skelton, Mayster freere, get you to bed, and I wyll come to bed within a while. The frere went, and dyd lye vpright, and snorted lyke a sowe. Skelton wente to the chaumber, and dyd see that the freere dyd lye soe; sayd to the wyfe, Geue me a washyng betle. Skelton then caste downe the clothes, and the freere dyd lye starke naked: then Skelton dyd shite vpon the freeres nauil and bellye; and then he did take the washyng betle, and dyd strike an harde stroke vpon the nauill & bellye of the freere, and dyd put out the candell, and went out of the chaumber. The freere felt hys bellye, & smelt a foule sauour, had thought hee had ben gored, and cried out and sayde, Helpe, helpe, helpe, I am kyllled! They of the house with Skelton wente into the chaumber, and asked what the freere dyd ayle. The freere sayde, I am kyllled, one hathe thrust me in the bellye. Fo, sayde Skelton, thou dronken soule, thou doost lye; thou hast beshydden thyselfe. Fo, sayde Skelton, let vs goe oute of the chaumber, for the knaue doothe stynke. The freere was ashamed, and cryed for water. Out with the whoreson, sayd Skelton, and wrap the sheetes togyther, and putte the freere in the hogge stye, or in the barne. The freere said, geue me some water into the barne: and there the freere dyd washe himselfe, and dydde lye there all the nyght longe. The chaumber and the bedde was dressed, and the sheetes shyfted; and then Skelton went to bed.

¶ Howe the cardynall desyred Skelton to make an epitaphe vpon his graue. Tale x.

Thomas Wolsey, cardynall and archbyshop of Yorke, had made a regall tombe to lye in after hee was deade: and he desyred Master Skelton to make for his tombe an epytaphe, whyche is a memoriall to shewe the lyfe with the actes of a noble man. Skelton sayde, If it dooe lyke your grace, I canne not make an epytaphe vnlesse that I do se your tombe. The cardynall sayde, I dooe praye you to meete wyth mee to morowe at the West Monesterye, and there shall you se my tombe a makynge. The pointment kept, and Skelton, seying the sumptuous coste, more pertaynyng for an emperoure or a maxymyous kyng, then for suche a man as he was (although cardynals wyll compare wyth kyngs), Well, sayd Skelton, if it shall like your grace to creepe into thys tombe whiles you be alyue, I can make an epitaphe; for I am sure that when that you be dead you shall neuer haue it. The whyche was verifed of truthe.

¶ Howe the hostler dyd byte Skeltons mare vnder the tale, for biting him by the arme. Tale xi.

Skelton vsed muche to ryde on a mare; and on a tyme hee happened into an inne, wher there was a folish ostler. Skelton said, Ostler, hast thou any mares bread? No, syr, sayd the ostler: I haue good horse bread, but I haue no mares bread. Skelton saide, I must haue mares bread. Syr, sayde the ostler, there is no mares bred to get in all the towne. Well, sayd Skelton, for this once, serue my mare wyth horse bread. In the meane time Skelton commaunded the ostler to saddle his mare; & the hosteler dyd gyrde the mare hard, and the hostler was in hys ierkyn, and hys shirte sleues wer aboue his elbowes, and in the girding of the mare hard the mare bitte the hostler by the arme, and bitte him sore. The hostler was angry, and dyd bite the mare vnder the taylor, saying, A whore, is it good byting by the bare arme? Skelton sayde then, Why, fellowe, haste thou hurt my mare?

Yea, sayde the hostler, ka me, ka thee: yf she dooe hurte me,  
I wyll displease her.

¶ Howe the cobbler tolde maister Skelton, it is good sleeping in a  
whole skinne. Tale xii.

In the paryssahe of Dys, whereas Skelton was person, there dwelled a cobbler, beyng halfe a souter, which was a tall man and a greate slouen, otherwyse named a slouche. The kynges inaiestyng hauynge warres byyonde the sea, Skelton sayd to thys aforsayd doughtie man, Neybour, you be a tall man, and in the kynges warres you must bere a standard. A standerd! said the cobbler, what a thing is that? Skelton saide, It is a great banner, such a one as thou docest vse to beare in Rogacyon weeke; and a lordes, or a knyghtes, or a gentlemannes armes shall bee vpon it; and the souldiers that be vnder the aforesayde persons fayghtyng vnder thy banner. Fayghtyng! sayde the cobbeler; I can no skil in faighting. No, said Skelton, thou shalte not fayght, but holde vp, and aduance the banner. By my fay, sayd the cobbler, I can no skill in the matter. Well, sayd Skelton, there is no reamedie but thou shalte forthe to dooe the kynges seruice in hys warres, for in all this countrey theare is not a more likelier manne to dooe suche a<sup>1</sup> feate as thou arte. Syr, sayde the cobbeler, I wyll geue you a fatte capon, that I maye bee at home. No, sayde Skelton, I wyll not haue none of thy capons; for thou shalte doe the kyng seruice in his wars. Why, sayd the cobbler, what shuld I doo? wyll you haue me to goe in the kynges warres, and to bee killed for my labour? then I shall be well at ease, for I shall haue my mendes in my nown handes. What, knaue, sayd Skelton, art thou a cowarde, hauyng so great bones? No, sayde the cobbler, I am not afearde: it is good to slepe in a whole skinne. Why, said Skelton, thou shalte bee harnessed to keepe away the strokes from thy skynne. By my fay, sayde the cobbler, if I must needes forthe, I will see howe yche shall bee ordered. Skel-

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<sup>1</sup> a] Old ed. "as."

ton dyd harnessse the doughtye squirell, and dyd put an helmet on his head; and when the helmet was on the coblers heade, the cobler sayde, What shall those hoales serue for? Skelton sayd, Holes to looke out to see thy enemyes. Yea, sayde the cobler, then am I in worsen case then euer I was; for then one may come and thrust a nayle into one of the holes, and prycke out myne eye. Therfore, said the cobler to Master Skelton, I wyll not goe to warre: my wyfe shall goe in my steade, for she can fyghte and playe the deuell wyth her distaffe, and with stole, staffe, cuppe, or candle-sticke; for, by my fay, I cham sicke; I chill go home to bed; I thinke I shall dye.

¶ How Master Skeltons miller deceyued hym manye times by playinge the theefe, and howe he was pardoned by Master Skelton, after the stealinge awaye of a preest oute of his bed at midnight. Tale xliii.

When Maister Skelton dyd dwell in the countrey, hee was agreede with a miller to haue hys corne grounde tolle free; and manye tymes when hys mayden[s] shoulde bake, they wanted of their mele, and complained to their mystres that they could not make their stint of breade. Mystres Skelton, beeynge verye angrye, tolde her husbände of it. Then Master Skelton sent for his miller, and asked hym howe it chanced that hee deceyued hym of his corne. I! saide John miller; nay, surely I neuer deceyued you; if that you can proue that by mee, do with mee as you lyst. Surely, sayd Skelton, if I doe fynde thee false anye more, thou shalt be hanged up by the necke. So Skelton apoynted one of hys seruauntes to stand at the mill whyle the corne was a grindyng. John myller, beyng a notable theefe, would feyn haue deceued him as he had don before, but beyng afrayd of Skeltons seruaunte, caused his wyfe to put one of her chyldren into y<sup>e</sup> myll dam, and to crye, Help, help, my childe is drowned! With that, John myller and all went out of the myll; & Skeltons seruaunte, being dilygent to helpe the chylde, thought not of the mele, and the while the myllers boye was redy wyth a sacke, and stole awaye the corne; so when they had taken vp the



childe, and all was safe, they came in agayne; & so the seruauant, hauyng hys gryste, went home mistrustyng nothyng; and when the maydes came to bake againe, as they dyd before, so they lacked of theyr meale agayne. Master Skelton calde for hys man, and asked him howe it chaunced that he was deceaued; & hee sayd that hee coule not tell, For I dyd your commaundement. And then Master Skelton sent for the myller, and sayde, Thou hast not vsed mee well, for I want of my mele. Why, what wold you haue me do? sayde the miller; you haue set your own man to watche mee. Well, then, sayd Skelton, if thou doest not tell me whych waye thou hast played the theefe wyth mee, thou shalt be hanged. I praye you be good master vnto me, & I wyll tell you the truthe: your seruauant wold not from my myll, & when I sawe none other remedye, I caused my wyfe to put one of my chyldren into the water, & to crie that it was drowned; and whiles wee were helpyng of the chylde out, one of my boyes dyd steale your corne. Yea, sayde Skelton, if thou haue suche pretie fetchis, you can dooe more then thys; and therefore, if thou dooeste not one thyng that I shall tell thee, I wyll folow the lawe on thee. What is that? sayd the myller. If that thou dooest not steale my cuppe of the table, when I am sette at meate, thou shalt not eskafe my handes. O good master, sayd John miller, I pray you forgeue me, and let me not dooe thys; I am not able to dooe it. Thou shalt neuer be forgeuen, sayde Skelton, withoute thou dooest it. When the miller sawe no remedye, he went & charged one of hys boyes, in an euenyng (when that Skelton was at supper) to sette fyre in one of hys hogges sties, farte from any house, for doying any harme. And it chaunced, that one of Skeltons seruauantes came oute, and spied the fire, and hee cryede, Helpe, helpe! for all that my master hath is lyke to be burnt. Hys master, hearing this, rose from hys supper with all the companie, and went to quenche the fyre; and the while John miller came in, and stole away hys cuppe, & went hys way. The fire being quickly slaked, Skelton cam in with his frendes, and reasoned wyth hys frendes whilch way they thought the fyre shoulde come; and euerye man made answer as thei thought good. And as they wer

resonyng, Skelton called for a cup of beare; and in no wise his cuppe whyche hee vsed to drynke in woulde not be founde. Skelton was verye angrie that his cup was mysynge, and asked whiche waye it shoulde bee gone; and no manne coulde tell hym of it. At last he bethought him of the miller, & sayd, Surely, he, that theefe, hath done this deede, and he is worthye to be hanged. And hee sent for the miller: so the miller tolde hym all howe hee had done. Truly, sayd Skelton, thou art a notable knaue; and withoute thou canste do me one other feate, thou shalte dye. O good master, sayde the miller, you promised to pardon me, and wil you now breake your promise? I, sayd Skelton; wythout thou canste steale the sheetes of my bed, when my wyfe and I am aslepe, thou shalte be hanged, that all suche knaues shall take example by thee. Alas, sayd the miller, whych waye shall I dooe this thinge? it is vnpossible for me to get theym while you bee there. Well, sayde Skelton, withoute thou dooe it, thou knowest the daunger. The myller went hys way, beyng very heauy, & studyed whiche waye he myght doo thys deede. He hanyng a litle boy, whyche knewe all the corners of Skeltons house & where hee lay, vpon a night when they were all busie, the boie crepte in vnder his bed, wyth a potte of yeste; and when Skelton & hys wyfe were fast aslepe, hee all to noynted the sheetes with yeste, as farre as hee could reache. At last Skelton awaked, & felt the sheetes all wete; waked his wife, and sayd, What, hast thou beshitten the bed? and she sayd, Naye, it is you that haue doone it, I thynke, for I am sure it is not I. And so theare fel a great strife betweene Skelton and his wyfe, thinkyng that the bedd had ben beshitten; and called for the mayde to geue them a cleane payre of shetes. And so they arose, & the mayde tooke the foule sheetes and threw them vnderneath the bed, thinkyng the nexte morning to haue fetched them away. The next time the maydes shuld goe to washyng, they looked all about, and coulde not fynde the sheetes; for Jacke the myllers boy had stollen them awaye. Then the myller was sent for agayne, to knowe where the sheetes were become: & the myller tolde Mayster Skelton all how he deuised to steale the sheetes. Howe say ye? sayde Skelton to hys

frendes; is not this a notable thief? is he not worthy to be hanged that canne dooe these deedes? O good maister, quoth the miller, nowe forgeue mee accordynge to youre promyse; for I haue done all that you haue commaunded mee, and I trust now you wyll pardon me. Naye, quoth Skelton, thou shalt doo yet one other feate, and that shall bee thys; thou shalte steale maister person out of hys bed at mid-night, that he shall not know where he is become. The miller made great mone and lamented, saying, I can not tel in the world howe I shall dooe, for I am neuer able to dooe this feate. Well, sayde Skelton, thou shalt dooe it, or els thou shalt fynde no fauour at my hands; and therefore go thy way. The miller beyng sorye, deuysed with himselfe which way he might bryng this thing to passe. And ii. or iii. nyghtes after, gathered a number of snailes, & greed with the sexten of the churche to haue the key of the churche dore, and went into the churche betwene the houres of a xi. and xii. in the night, & tooke the snayles, and lyghted a sorte of little waxe candles, & set vpon euerie snayle one, & the snayles crepte about the churche wyth the same candels vpon their backes; and then he went into the vestrey, and put a cope vpon hys backe, & stode very solemnely at the hye alter with a booke in hys hand; and afterwarde tolled the bell, that the preest lyinge in the churche yard might heare him. The preest, hearyng the bell tolle, starte oute of his slepe, and looked out of hys windowe, and sawe suche a lyght in the church, was very muche amased, and thought surely that the churche had ben on fire, and wente for to see what wonder it shoulde be. And when he came there, he founde the church dore open, and went vp into the quier; and see the miller standyng in hys vestementes, and a booke in hys hand, praying deuoutly, & all the lyghtes in the church, thought surely with hymselfe it was some angeil come downe from heauen, or some other great miracle, blessed hymselfe and sayde, In the name of the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghoste, what art thou that standest here in thys hollye place? O, sayde the myler, I am saynt Peter, whych kepe<sup>1</sup> the keyes of heauen gate,

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<sup>1</sup> *kepe*] Old ed. "kepte."

and thou knowest that none can enter into heauen excepte I let hym in; and I am sent oute from heauen for thee. For mee! quoth the preest: good saynt Peter, worship maye thou be! I am glad to heare that newes. Because thou hast done good deedes, sayd the myller, and serued God, hee hath sent for thee afore domes day come, that thou shalt not knowe the troubles of y<sup>e</sup> worlde. O, blessed be God! sayde the preest; I am very well contented for to goe: yet if it woulde please God to let me go home and distrybute such things as I haue to the poore, I woulde bee verye glad. No sayde the miller; if thou dooest delite more in thy goodes then in the joyes of heauen, thou art not for God; therefore prepare thyselfe, and goe into this bagge which I have brought for thee. The miller hauyng a great quarter sacke, the poore priest wente into it, thynkyng verylye hee had gon to heauen, yet was very sory to parte from hys goodes; asked saynt Peter how long it wold be ere he came there. The miller sayd he should be there quickly; and in he got the priest, and tied vp the sacke, and put out the lightes, & layed euery thyng in their place, and tooke the preest on his backe, & locked the church dores, & to go: and when he came to go ouer the church stile, the preest was verye heauye, and the miller caste hym ouer the stile that the priest cryed oh. O good seint Peter, sayde the preeste, whyther goe I nowe? O, sayde the myller, these bee the panges that ye must abyde before you come to heauen. O, quoth the preest, I would I were there once! Vp he got the priest agayn, & caried hym tyll hee came to the toppe of an hye hyll, a litle from hys house, and caste hym downe the hyll, that hys head had many shrewde rappes, that hys necke was almost burst. O good saynt Peter, said the priest, where am I nowe? You are almost nowe at heauen; & caried hym with much a doo, tyll hee came to hys owne house, and then the miller threwe him ouer the thresholde. O good saynte Peter, sayde the preeste, where am I nowe? thys is the soreste pange that ener I bydde. O, sayd the<sup>1</sup> myller, geue God thanks that thou haste had

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<sup>1</sup> the] Old ed. "that."

frendes; is not this a notable theef? is he not worthy to be hanged that canne dooe these deedes? O good maister, quoth the miller, nowe forgeue mee accordyng to youre promyse; for I haue done all that you haue commaunded mee, and I trust now you wyll pardon me. Naye, quoth Skelton, thou shalt doo yet one other feate, and that shall bee thys; thou shalte steale maister person out of hys bed at midnight, that he shall not know where he is become. The miller made great mone and lamented, saying, I can not tel in the world howe I shall dooe, for I am neuer able to dooe this feate. Well, sayde Skelton, thou shalt dooe it, or els thou shalt fynde no fauour at my hands; and therefore go thy way. The miller beyng sorye, deuysed with himselfe which way he might bryng this thing to passe. And ii. or iii. nyghtes after, gathered a number of snailes, & greed with the sexten of the churche to haue the key of the churche dore, and went into the churche betwene the houres of a xi. and xii. in the night, & tooke the snailes, and lyghted a sorte of little waxe candles, & set vpon euerie snayle one, & the snayles crepte about the churche wyth the same candels vpon their backes; and then he went into the vestrey, and put a cope vpon hys backe, & stode very solemnely at the hye alter with a booke in hys hand; and afterwarde tolled the bell, that the preest lyinge in the churche yard might heare him. The preest, hearyng the bell tolle, starte oute of his slepe, and looked out of hys windowe, and sawe suche a lyght in the church, was very muche amased, and thought surely that the churche had ben on fire, and wents for to see what wonder it shoulde be. And when he came there, he founde the church dore open, and went vp into the quier; and see the miller standyng in hys vestementes, and a booke in hys hand, praying deuoutly, & all the lyghtes in the church, thought surely with hymselfe it was some angeil come downe from heauen, or some other great miracle, blessed hymselfe and sayde, In the name of the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghoste, what art thou that standest here in thys hollye place? O, sayde the myler, I am saynt Peter, whych kepe<sup>1</sup> the keyes of heauen gate,

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and thou knowest that none can enter into heauen excepte I let hym in; and I am sent oute from heauen for thee. For mee! quoth the preest: good saynt Peter, worship maye thou be! I am glad to heare that newes. Because thou hast done good deedes, sayd the myller, and serned God, hee hath sent for thee afore domes day come, that thou shalt not knowe the troubles of y<sup>e</sup> worlde. O, blessed be God! sayde the preest; I am very well contented for to goe: yet if it woulde please God to let me go home and distrybute such things as I haue to the poore, I woulde bee verye glad. No sayde the miller; if thou docest delite more in thy goodes then in the joyes of heauen, thou art not for God; therefore prepare thyselfe, and goe into this bagge which I have brought for thee. The miller hauyng a great quarter sacke, the poore priest wente into it, thynkyng verylye hee had gon to heauen, yet was very sory to parte from hys goodes; asked saynt Peter how long it wold be ere he came there. The miller sayd he should be there quickly; and in he got the priest, and tied vp the sacke, and put out the lightes, & layed euery thyng in their place, and tooke the preest on his backe, & locked the church dores, & to go: and when he came to go ouer the church stile, the preest was verye heauey, and the miller caste hym ouer the stile that the priest cryed oh. O good seint Peter, sayde the preeste, whyther goe I nowe? O, sayde the myller, these bee the panges that ye must abyde before you come to heauen. O, quoth the preest, I would I were there once! Vp he got the priest agayn, & caried hym tyll hee came to the toppe of an hye hyll, a litle from hys house, and caste hym downe the hyll, that hys head had many shrewde rappes, that hys necke was almost burst. O good saynt Peter, said the priest, where am I nowe? You are almost nowe at heauen; & caried hym with much a doo, tyll hee came to hys owne house, and then the miller threwe him ouer the thresholde. O good saynte Peter, sayde the preeste, where am I nowe? thys is the soreste pange that euer I bydde. O, sayd the<sup>1</sup> myller, geue God thanks that thou haste had

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<sup>1</sup> *the*] Old ed. "that."

**lxxxviii    MERIE TALES OF SKELTON.**

pacience to abide all thys payne, for nowe thou arte goyng vppe into heauen; and tyed a rope aboute the sacke, and drew hym vppe to the toppes of the chymnye, and there let him hange. O good S. Peter, tell me nowe where I am, sayde the preest. Marye, sayd he, thou art now in the tope of John millers chimney. A vengeaunce on thee, knaue! sayde the preeste: hast thou made me beleue al this while that I was goyng vp into heauen? well, nowe I am here, & ever I come downe again, I wil make thee to repent it. But John myller was gladd that he had brought hym there. And in the mornyng the sexten rang all in to seruise; & when the people were come to churche, the preest was lackyng. The parish asked the sexten wher the preest was; and the sexten sayd, I can not tell: then the parrishe sent to master Skelton, and tolde howe their prieste was lacking to saye them seruice. Maister Skelton meruayled at that, and bethought hym of the crafty dooyng of the miller, sent for John myller; and when the miller was come, Skelton sayd to the miller, Canst thou tell wher the parish preest is? The myller vp and told him all together how he had doone. Maister Skelton, considering the matter, sayde to the miller, Why, thou vnreuerent knaue, hast thou hanled the poore preest on this fashion, and putte on the holy ornaments vpon a knaues backe? thou shalte be hanged, & it coste me all the good I haue. John miller fell vppon his knees, and desyred maister Skelton to pardon hym; For I dyd nothyng, sayd the miller, but that you sayd you woulde forgeue me. Nay, not so, sayd Skelton; but if thou canst steale my gelding out of my stable, my two men watching him, I will pardon thee; and if they take thee, they shall strike of thy heade; for Skelton thought it better that such a false knaue shoulde lose hys head then to liue. Then John miller was very sad, & bethought him how to bring it to passe. Then he remembered that ther was a man left hangyng vppon the galowes the day before, went preuely in the nyght and tooke him downe, and cut of his head, and put it vpon a pole, & brake a hole into the stable, and put in a candle lighted, thrustyng in the head a lytle & a lytle. The men watching the stable, seyng that, got them selues neare to the hole (thinkinge that it was his head), & one of them wyth

hys sworde cutte it of. Then they for gladnesse presented it vnto theyr master, leauynge the stable doore open: then John miller went in, and stole away the gelding. Master Skelton, lookyng vppon the head, sawe it was the theues head that was left hangyng vpon the galowes, sayd, Alas, how ofte hath this false knaue deceiued vs! Go quickly to the stable agayne, for I thinke my geldyng is gone. Hys men, goyng backe agayn, found it euen so. Then they came agayn, and told their maister hys horse was gone. Ah, I thought so, you doltish knaues! said Skelton; but if I had sent wise men about it, it had not ben so. Then Skelton sent for the miller, and asked hym if hee coulede tell where hys horse was. Safe ynough, maister, sayde the miller: for hee tolde Skelton all the matter how hee had done. Well, sayd Skelton, consyderyng hys tale, sayd, that he was worthie to bee hanged, For thou doost excell all the theeues that euer I knew or heard of; but for my promise sake I forgeue thee, vpon condition thou wylte become an honest man, & leaue all thy crafte & false dealyng. And thus John miller skaped vnpunished.

¶ How Skelton was in prison at the commaundement of the cardynall. [Tale xiv.]

On a tyme Skelton did meete with certain frendes of hys at Charyng crosse, after that hee was in prison at my lord cardynals commaundement: & his frende sayd, I am glad you bee abrode amonge your frendes, for you haue ben long pent in. Skelton sayd, By the masse, I am glad I am out indeede, for I haue ben pent in, like a roche or fissh, at Westminster in prison. The cardinal, hearing of those words, sent for him agayne. Skelton kneling of hys knees before hym, after long communication to Skelton had, Skelton desyred the cardynall to graunte hym<sup>1</sup> a boun. Thou shalt haue none, sayd the cardynall. Thassistence desirid that he might haue it graunted, for they thought it should be some merye pastime that he wyl shewe your grace. Say on,

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<sup>1</sup> *hym*] Old ed. "gym."



thou hore head, sayd the cardynall to Skelton. I pray your grace to let me lye doune and wallow, for I can kneele no longer.

¶ Howe the vinteners wife put water into Skeltons wine. Tale xv.

Skelton did loue wel a cup of good wyne. And on a daye he dyd make merye in a tauerne in London: and the morow after hee sent to the same place againe for a quart of y<sup>e</sup> same wine he drunke of before; the whiche was clene chaunged & brued again. Skelton perceiuing this, he went to the tauerne, & dyd sytte down in a chaire, & dyd sygh very sore, and made great lamentacion. The wife of the house, perceiuinge this, said to master Skelton, Howe is it with you, master Skelton? He answered and said, I dyd neuer so euill; and then he dyd reache another greate syghe, sayinge, I am afraide that I shal neuer be saued, nor cum to heauen. Why, said the wife, shuld you dispaire so much in Goddes mercy? Nay, said he, it is past all remedye. Then said the wife, I dooe praye you breake your mind vnto mee. O, sayd Skelton, I would gladlye shewe you the cause of my dolour, if that I wist that you would keepe my counsell. Sir, said shee, I haue ben made of councel of greater matters then you can shew me. Naye, nay, said Skelton, my matter passeth all other matters, for I think I shal sinke to hell for my great offences; for I sent thys daye to you for wyne to say masse withall; and wee haue a stronge lawe that euery priest is bounde to put into hys chalice, when hee doth singe or saye masse, some wyne and water; the which dothe signifye the water & bloude that dyd runne oute of Chrystes syde, when Longeons the blynde knyght dyd thrust a speare to Christes harte; & thys daye I dyd put no water into my wyne, when that I did put wine into my chalys. Then sayd the vintiners wife, Be mery, maister Skelton, and keepe my counsell, for, by my faythe, I dyd put into the vessell of wyne that I did send you of to day x. gallandes of water; and therfore take no thought, master Skelton, for I warraunt you. Then said Skelton, Dame, I dooe beshrewe thee for thy laboure, for I thought so muche before; for throughe such vses & brewyng

of wyne maye men be deceyued, and be hurte by drynkinge  
of suche euell wyne; for all wines must be strong, and fayre,  
and well coloured; it must haue a redolent sauoure; it must  
be colde, and sprinklynge in the peece or in the glasse.

¶ Thus endeth the merie Tales of Maister Skelton, very pleasaunt,  
for the recreacion of minde.

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## NOTICES OF SKELTON

FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

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From the imperfect copy of *A C Mery Talys*, small fol.,  
printed by John Rastell. (See Singer's reprint, p. 55.)

"Of mayster Skelton that broughte the bysshop of Norwiche ii  
fesauntys. xl.

It fortuneth ther was a great vvariance bitwen the bysshop of Norwych and one mayster Skelton a poyet lauryat; in so much that the bysshop commaundyd hym that he shuld not come in his gatys. Thys mayster Skelton dyd absent hymselfe for a long seson. But at the laste he thought to do hys dewty to hym, and studyed weys how he myght obtayne the bysshopys fauour, and determynyd himself that he wold come to hym wyth some present, and humble hymself to the byshop; and gat a cople of fesantes, and cam to the bysshoppys place, and requyred the porter he myghte come in to speke wyth my lord. This porter, knowyng his lordys pleasure, wold not suffer him to come in at the gatys; wherfor thys mayster Skelton went on the baksyde to seke some other way to come in to the place. But the place was motyd that he cowlde se no way to come ouer, except in one place where there lay a long tree ouer the motte in maner of a brydge, that was fallyn down wyth wynd; wherfore thys mayster Skelton went along vpon the tree to come ouer, and whan he was almost ouer, hys fote slyppyd for lak of sure fotyng, and fel into the mote vp to myddyll; but at the last

he recoueryd hymself, and, as well as he coud, dried hymself ageyne, and sodenly cam to the byshop, beyng in hys hall, than lately rysen from dyner: whyche, whan he saw Skelton commynge sodenly, sayd to hym, Why, thow caytyfe, I warnyd the thow shuldys neuer come in at my gatys, and chargyd my porter to kepe the out. Forsoth, my lorde, quod Skelton, though ye gaue suche charge, and though your gatys by neuer so suerly kept, yet yt ys no more possible to kepe me out of your dorys than to kepe out crowes or pyes; for I cam not in at your gatys, but I cam ouer the mote, that I haue ben almost drownyd for my labour. And shewyd hys clothys how euyll he was arayed, whych causyd many that stode therby to laughe apace. Than quod Skelton, Yf it lyke your lordeshyp, I haue brought you a dyshe to your super, a cople of fesantes. Nay, quod the byshop, I defy the and thy fesauntys also, and, wrech as thou art, pyke the out of my howse, for I wyll none of thy gyft how [*something lost here*] Skelton than, consyderynge that the bysshoppe called hym fole so ofte, sayd to one of hys famylyers thereby, that thoughe it were euyll to be christened a fole, yet it was moche worse to be confyrmyd a fole of suche a bysshoppe, for the name of confymacyon muste nedes abyde. Therfore he ymagened howe he myghte auoyde that confymacyon, and mused a whyle, and at the laste, sayde to the bysshope thus, If your lordeshype knewe the names of these fesantes, ye wold [be] contente to take them. Why, caytefe, quod the bisshoppe hastily and angrey, [what] be theyr names? Ywys, my lorde, quod Skelton, this fesante is called Alpha, which is, in primys the fyrst, and this is called O, that is, novissimus the last; and for the more playne vnderstandynge of my mynde, if it plesse your lordeshype to take them, I promyse you, this Alpha is the fyrste that euer I gaue you, and this O is the laste that euer I wyll gyue you whyle I lyue. At which answer all that were by made great laughter, and they all de[s]ired the bisshoppe to be good lorde vnto him for his merye conceytes: at which [earnest entrey, as it] wente, the bysshope was contente to take hym vnto his fauer agayne.

By thys tale ye may se that mery conceytes dothe [a man

more] good than to frete hymselfe with a[nger] and melancholy."

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From *Tales, and quicke answers, very mery, and pleasant to rede*. 4to. n.d., printed by Thomas Berthelet. (See Singer's reprint, p. 9.)

"Of the beggers answers to M. Skelton the poete. xiii.

A *POURE* begger, that was foule, blacke, and lothlye to beholde, cam vpon a tyme vnto mayster Skelton the poete, and asked him his almes. To whom mayster Skelton sayde, I praye the gette the awaye fro me, for thou lokeste as though thou camest out of helle. The poure man, perceyuing he wolde gyue him no thynge, answerd, For soth, syr, ye say trouth; I came oute of helle. Why dyddest thou nat tary styl there? quod mayster Skelton. Mary, syr, quod the begger, there is no roume for such poure beggers as I am; all is kepte for suche gentyl men as ye be."

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Prefixed to *Pithy pleasaunt and profitable workes of maister Skelton, Poete Laureate*. Nowe collected and newly published. Anno 1568. 12mo.

"If slouth and tract of time  
 (That wears eche thing away)  
 Should rust and canker worthy artes,  
 Good works would soon decay.  
 If suche as present are  
 Forgoeth the people past,  
 Our selu[e]s should soon in silence slepe,  
 And loe renom at last.  
 No soyll nor land so rude  
 But som odd men can shoe:

Than should the learned pas unknowne,  
Whoes pen & skill did fleo?  
God sheeld our slouth<sup>1</sup> wear sutch,  
Or world so simple nowe,  
That knowledge scaept without reward,  
Who sercheth vertue throwe,  
And paints forth vyce aright,  
And blames abuses of men,  
And shoes what lief desarnes rebuke,  
And who the prayes of pen.  
You see howe forrayn realms  
Advance their poets all;  
And ours are drowned in the dust,  
Or fiong against the wall.  
In Fraunce did Marrot raigne;  
And neighbour thear vnto  
Was Petrark, marching full with Dantte,  
Who erst did wonders do;  
Among the noble Grekes  
Was Homere full of skill;  
And where that Ouid norisht was  
The soyll did florissh still  
With letters hie of style;  
But Virgill wan the fraes,<sup>2</sup>  
And past them all for deep engyen,  
And made them all to gae  
Upon the bookes he made:  
Thus eche of them, you see,  
Wan prayse and fame, and honor had,  
Eche one in their degree.  
I pray you, then, my friendes,  
Disdaine not for to vewe  
The workes and sugred verses fine  
Of our raer poetes newe;

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<sup>1</sup> *slouth*] Old ed. "sloulth."

<sup>2</sup> *fraes*] i. e. phrase.—In the *Muses Library*, 1787, p. 188. this word is altered to "bayes."

Whoes barborus language rued  
Perhaps ye may mislike;  
But blame them not that ruedly playes  
If they the ball do strike,  
Nor skorne not mother tunge,  
O babes of Englishe breed!  
I haue of other language seen,  
And you at full may reed  
Fine verses trimly wrought,  
And coutcht in comly sort;  
But neuer I nor you, I troe,  
In sentence plaine and short  
Did yet beholde with eye,  
In any forraine tonge,  
A higher verse, a stastly[er] style,  
That may be read or song,  
Than is this daye indeede  
Our Englishe verse and ryme,  
The grace wherof doth touch ye gods,  
And reach the cloudes somtime.  
Thorow earth and waters deepe  
The pen by skill doth passe,  
And featly nyps the worldes abuse,  
And shoes vs in a glasse  
The vertu and the vice  
Of euery wyght alyue:  
The hony combe that bee doth make  
Is not so sweete in hyue  
As are the golden leues  
That drops from poets head,  
Which doth surmount our common talke  
As farre as dros doth lead:  
The flowre is sifted cleane,  
The bran is cast aside,  
And so good corne is knowen from chaffe,  
And each fine graine is spide.  
Peers Plowman was full plaine,  
And Chausers spreet was great;

Earle Surry had a goodly vayne;  
Lord Vaus the marke did beat,  
And Phaer did hit the pricke  
In thinges he did translate,  
And Edwards had a special gift;  
And diuers men of late  
Hath helpt our Englishe tounge,  
That first was baes and brute:—  
Ohe, shal I leaue out Skeltons name,  
The blossome of my frute,  
The tree wheron indeed  
My branchis all might groe?  
Nay, Skelton wore the lawrell wreath,  
And past in schoels, ye knoe;  
A poet for his arte,  
Whoes iudgment suer was hie,  
And had great practies of the pen,  
His works they will not lie;  
His terms to taunts did lean,  
His talke was as he wraet,  
Full quick of witte, right sharp of words,  
And skilfull of the staet;  
Of reason riep and good,  
And to the haetfull mynd,  
That did disdain his doings still,  
A skornar of his kynd;  
Most pleasant euery way,  
As poets ought to be,  
And seldom out of princis grace,  
And great with eche degre.  
Thus haue you heard at full  
What Skelton was indeed;  
A further knowledge shall you haue,  
If you his bookes do reed.  
I haue of meer good will  
Theas verses written heer,  
To honour vertue as I ought,  
And make his fame apeer,



That whan the garland gay  
 Of lawrel leaues but laet:  
 Small is my pain, great is his prayes,  
 That thus sutch honour gaet.

*Finis quod Churchyarde."*

From *Johannis Parkhursti Ludicra siue Epigrammata Juven-  
 ilia*. 1678, 4to.

"De Skeltono vate & sacerdote.

SKELTONUS grauidam reddebat forte puellam,  
 Insigni forma quæ peperit puerum.  
 Illico multorum fama hæc pervenit ad aures,  
 Esse patrem nato sacrificum puero.  
 Skeltonum facti non pœnitet aut pudet; ædes  
 Ad sacras festo sed venit ipse die:  
 Pulpita conscendit facturus verba popello;  
 Inque hæc prorupit dicta vir ille bonus;  
 Quid vos, O scurræ, capit admiratio tanta?  
 Non sunt eunuchi, credite, sacrifici:  
 O stolidi, vitulum num me genuisse putatis?  
 Non genni vitulum, sed lepidum puerum;  
 Sique meis verbis non creditis, en puer, inquit;  
 Atque e suggesto protulit, ac abiit."

p. 108.

*From A Treatise Against Judicial Astrologie. Dedicated to the Right Honorable Sir Thomas Egerton Knight, Lord Keeper of the Great Seale, and one of her Maiesties most honorable priuie Councill. Written by John Chamber, one of the Prebendaries of her Maiesties free Chappell of Windsor, and Fellow of Eaton College. 1601. 4to.*

"Not much vnlike to merrie Skelton, who thrust his wife out at the doore, and receiued her in againe at the window. The storie is well known how the bishop had charged him to thrust his wife out of the doore: but that which was but a meriment in Skelton," &c. p. 99.

"So that the leape yeare, for any thing I see, might well vse the defence of merie Skelton, who being a priest, and hauing a child by his wife, euerie one cryed out, Oh, Skelton hath a child, fie on him, &c. Their mouthes at that time he could not stop: but on a holy day, in a mery mood, he brought the child to church with him, and in the pulpit stript it naked, and held it out, saying, See this child: is it not a pretie child, as other children be, euen as any of yours? hath it not legs, armes, head, feet, limbes, proportioned enery way as it shuld be? If Skelton had begot a monster, as a calfe, or such like, what a life should poore Skelton haue had then? So we say for the leape yeare, if it had changed the nature of things, as it is charged, how should it haue done then to defende itselfe?" p. 118.

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*From The Life of Long Meg of Westminster: containing the mad merry pranks she played in her life time, not onely in performing sundry quarrels with diuers ruffians about London: But also how valiantly she behaved her selfe in the warres of Bolloingne. 1636. 4to. (Of this tract there is said to have been a much earlier edition. I quote from the reprint in Miscellanea Antiqua Anglicana, 1816.)*

“CHAP. II.

Containing how he [the carrier] placed her in Westminster, and what shee did at her placing.

AFTER the carrier had set vp his horse, and dispatcht his lading, hee remembred his oath, and therefore bethought him how he might place these three maides: with that hee called to minde that the mistresse at the Eagle in Westminster had spoken diuers times to him for a seruant; he with his carriage passed ouer the fields to her house, where he found her sitting and drinking with a Spanish knight called sir James of Castile, doctor Skelton, and Will Sommers; told her how hee had brought vp to London three Lancashire lasses, and seeing she was oft desirous to haue a maid, now she should take her choyce which of them she would haue. Marry, quoth shee, (being a very merry and a pleasant woman,) carrier, thou commest in good time; for not onely I want a maid, but heere bee three gentlemen that shall giue me their opinions, which of them I shall haue. With that the maids were bidden come in, and she intreated them to giue their verdict. Streight as soone as they saw Long Meg, they began to smile; and doctor Skelton in his mad merry veire, blessing himselfe, began thus:

*Domine, Domine, vnde hoc?*

What is she in the gray cassock?

Me thinkes she is of a large length,

Of a tall pitch, and a good strength,

With strong armes and stiffe bones;

This is a wench for the nones:

Her lookes are bonny and blithe,  
She seemes neither lither nor lithe,  
But young of age,  
And of a merry visage,  
Neither beastly nor bowsie,  
Sleepy nor drowsie,  
But faire fac'd and of a good size;  
Therefore, hostesse, if you be wise,  
Once be ruled by me,  
Take this wench to thee;  
For this is plaine,  
Shee'l doe more worke than these twaine:  
I tell thee, hostesse, I doe not mocke;  
Take her in the gray cassocke.

What is your opinion? quoth the hostesse to sir James of Castile. Question with her, quoth he, what she can do, and then Ile giue you mine opinion: and yet first, hostesse, aske Will Sommers opinion. Will smiled, and swore that his hostesse should not haue her, but king Harry should buy her. Why so, Will? quoth doctor Skelton. Because, quoth Will Sommers, that she shall be kept for breed; for if the king would marry her to long Sanders of the court, they would bring forth none but souldiers. Well, the hostesse demanded what her name was. Margaret, forsooth, quoth she. And what worke can you doe? Faith, little, mistresse, quoth she, but handy labour, as to wash and wring, to make cleane a house, to brew, bake, or any such drudgery: for my needle, to that I haue beene little vsed to. Thou art, quoth the hostesse, a good lusty wench, and therefore I like thee the better: I haue here a great charge, for I keepe a victualling house, and diuers times there come in swaggering fellows, that, when they haue eat and dranke, will not pay what they call for: yet if thou take the charge of my drinke, I must be answered out of your wages. Content, mistresse, quoth she; for while I serue you, if any stale cutter comes in, and thinkes to pay the shot with swearing, hey, gogs wounds, let me alone! Ile not onely (if his clothes be worth it) make him pay ere hee passe, but lend him as many bats as his crag will

carry, and then throw him out of doores. At this they all smiled. Nay, mistresse, quoth the carrier, 'tis true, for my poore pilch here is able with a paire of blew shoulders to sweare as much; and with that he told them how she had vsed him at her comming to London. I cannot thinke, quoth sir James of Castile, that she is so strong. Try her, quoth Skelton, for I haue heard that Spaniards are of wonderfull strength. Sir James in a brauery would needs make experience, and therefore askt the maide if she durst change a box on the eare with him. I, sir, quoth she, that I dare, if my mistresse will giue me leaue. Yes, Meg, quoth she; doe thy best. And with that it was a question who should stand first: Marry, that I will, sir, quoth she; and so stood to abide sir James his blow; who, forcing himselfe with all his might, gaue her such a box that she could scarcely stand, yet shee stirred no more than a post. Then sir James he stood, and the hostesse willed her not spare her strength. No, quoth Skelton; and if she fell him downe, Ile giue her a paire of new hose and shoone. Mistresse, quoth Meg (and with that she stroke vp her sleene,) here is a foule fist, and it hath past much drudgery, but, trust me, I thinke it will giue a good blow: and with that she raught at him so strongly, that downe fell sir James at her feet. By my faith, quoth Will Sommers, she strikes a blow like an oxe, for she hath strooke down an asse. At this they all laught. Sir James was saahamed, and Meg was entertained into seruice."

#### "CHAP. IV.

Containing the merry skirmish that was betweene her and sir James of Castile, a Spanish knight, and what was the end of their combat.

There was a great suter to Meg's mistresse, called sir James of Castile, to winne her loue: but her affection was set on doctor Skelton; so that sir James could get no grant of any fauour. Whereupon he swore, if hee knew who were her paramour, hee would runne him thorow with his rapier. The mistresse (who had a great delight to bee pleasant) made a match betweene her and Long Meg, that she should goe drest

in gentlemans apparell, and with her sword and buckler goe and meet sir James in Saint Georges field[s]; if she beat him, she should for her labour haue a new petticote. Let me alone, quoth Meg; the deuill take me if I lose a petticote. And with that her mistris deliuered her a suit of white sattin, that was one of the guards that lay at her house. Meg put it on, and tooke her whinyard by her side, and away she went into Saint Georges fields to meet sir James. Presently after came sir James, and found his mistris very melancholy, as women haue faces that are fit for all fancies. What aile you, sweetheart? quoth he; tell me; hath any man wronged you? if he hath, be he the proudest champion in London, Ile haue him by the eares, and teach him to know, sir James of Castile can chastise whom he list. Now, quoth she, shall I know if you loue me: a squaring long knaue, in a white sattin doublet, hath this day monstrously misused me in words, and I haue no body to reuenge it; and in a brauery went out of doores, and bad the proudest champion I had come into Saint Georges fields and quit my wrong, if they durst: now sir James, if euer you loued mee, learne the knaue to know how he hath wronged me, and I will grant whatsoever you request at my hands. Marry, that I will, quoth he; and for that you may see how I will vse the knaue, goe with me, you and master doctor Skelton, and be eye-witnesses of my manhood. To this they agreed; and all three went into Saint Georges fields, where Long Meg was walking by the windmils. Yonder, quoth she, walkes the villain that abused me. Follow me, hostesse, quoth sir James; Ile goe to him. As soone as hee drew nigh, Meg began to settle herselfe, and so did sir James: but Meg past on as though she would haue gone by. Nay, sirrah, stay, quoth sir James; you and I part not so, we must haue a bout ere we passe; for I am this gentlewomans champion, and flatly for her sake will haue you by the eares. Meg replied not a word; but only out with her sword: and to it they went. At the first bout Meg hit him on the hand, and hurt him a little, but endangered him diuers times, and made him giue ground, following so hotly, that shee strucke sir James' weapon out of his hand; then when she saw him disarm'd, shee stept within him, and, drawing

her ponyard, swore all the world should not saue him. Oh, saue mee, sir! quoth hee; I am a knight, and 'tis but for a womans matter; spill not my blood. Wert thou twenty knights, quoth Meg, and were the king himselfe heere, hee should not saue thy life, vnlesse thou grant mee one thing. Whatsoeuer it bee, quoth sir James. Marry, quoth shee, that is, that this night thou wait on my trencher at supper at this womans house; and when supper is done, then confesse me to be thy better at weapon in any ground in England. I will do it, sir, quoth he, as I am a true knight. With this they departed, and sir James went home with his hostesse sorrowfull and ashamed, swearing that his adversary was the stoutest man in England. Well, supper was prouided, and sir Thomas Moore and diuers other gentlemen bidden thither by Skeltons means, to make vp the jest; which when sir James saw inuited, hee put a good face on the matter, and thought to make a slight matter of it, and therefore beforehand told sir Thomas Moore what had befallen him, how entring in a quarrell of his hostesse, hee fought with a desperate gentleman of the court, who had foiled him, and giuen him in charge to wait on his trencher that night. Sir Thomas Moore answered sir James, that it was no dishonour to be foyled by a gentleman [of England?], sith Cæsar himselfe was beaten backe by their valour. As thus they were discanting of the valour of Englishmen, in came Meg marching in her mans attire: euen as shee entered in at the doore, This, sir Thomas Moore, quoth sir James, is that English gentleman whose prowesse I so highly commend, and to whom in all valour I account myselfe so inferiour. And, sir, quoth shee, pulling off her hat, and her haire falling about her eares, hee that so hurt him to day is none other but Long Meg of Westminster; and so you are all welcome. At this all the company fell in a great laughing, and sir James was amazed that a woman should so wap him in a whinyard: well, hee as the rest was faine to laugh at the matter, and all that supper time to wait on her trencher, who had leane of her mistris that shee might be master of the feast; where with a good laughter they made good cheere, sir James playing the proper page, and Meg sitting in her maiesty. Thus was sir James

disgraced for his lone, and Meg after counted for a proper woman."

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*Scogan and Skelton*, 1600, a play by Richard Hathwaye and William Rankins, is mentioned in Henslowe's MSS.: see Malone's *Shakespeare* (by Boswell,) iii. 324.

Notices of Skelton may also be found in:—

*A Dialogue bothe pleasunt and pietifull, wherein is a godlie regiment against the Fever Pestilence, with a consolkon and comforte againste death. Newlie corrected by William Bullein, the authour thereof.* 1578, 8vo. Of this piece I have seen only the above ed.; but it appeared originally in 1564. It contains notices of several poets, introduced by way of interlude or diversion in the midst of a serious dialogue; and (at p. 17) Skelton is described as sitting "in the corner of a Piller, with a frostie bitten face, frownyng," and "wrytyng many a sharpe Disticons" against Wolsey—

"How the Cardinall came of nought,  
And his Prelacie solde and bought," &c.

(15 verses chiefly made up from Skelton's works).—*The Rewarde of Wickednesse, discoursing the sundrye monstrous abuses of wicked and vngodly Wordelings, &c. Newly compiled by Richard Robinson, seruaunt in householde to the right honorable Earle of Shrewsbury, &c.* 4to, n.d. (The Address to the Reader dated 1574,) at sig. Q 2.—*A Discourse of English Poetrie, &c., By William Webbe, Graduate,* 1586, 4to, at sig. c iii.—*The Arte of English Poesie, &c.* (attributed to one Puttenham: but see D'Israeli's *Amen. of Lit.* ii. 278, sqq.), 1589, 4to, at pp. 48, 50, 69.—*Four Letters, and certaine Sonnets: Especially touching Robert Greene, &c.* (by Gabriell Harvey,) 1592, 4to, at p. 7.—*Pierces Supererogation or a New Prayse of the Old Asse, &c.* [by] Gabriell Harvey, 1598, 4to, at p. 75.—*Palladis Tamia. Wits Treasury Being the Second part of Wits Com*



*monwealthe*. By Francis Meres, &c., 1598, 12mo, at p. 279.—*Virgideciarvm. The three last Bookes. Of byting Satyres* (by Joseph Hall,) 1598, 12mo, at p. 83.—*The Downfall of Robert Earle of Huntington, Afterward called Robin Hood of merrie Sherwodde*, &c. (by Anthony Munday,) 1601, 4to. In this play, which is supposed to be a rehearsal previous to its performance before Henry the Eighth, Skelton acts the part of Friar Tuck.—In *The Death of Robert, Earle of Hentington*, &c. (by Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle,) 1601, 4to, which forms a Second Part to the drama just described, Skelton, though his name is not mentioned throughout it, is still supposed to act the Friar. *Miscellanea*, written out by "Johnes Mauritijs" between 1604 and 1605—*MS. Reg. 12. B. v.*—contains (at fol. 14,) and attributes to Skelton, a well-known indelicate *jeu d'esprit*.—*Pimlyco, or Runne Red-Cap. Tis a mad world at Hogsdon*, 1609, 4to. Besides a notice of Skelton, this poem contains two long quotations from his *Elynour Rummynge*.—*Cornu-copiae. Pasquils Night-Cap: Or Antidot for the Head-ache* (by Samuel Rowlands,) 1612, 4to, at sig. O 2 and sig. Q 3. The second notice of Skelton in this poem is as follows;

" And such a wondrous troupe the Hornpipe treads,  
One cannot passe another for their heads,  
That shortly we shall haue (*as Skelton ieste*)  
A greater sort of horned men than beasts: "

but I recollect nothing in his works to which the allusion can be applied.—*An Halfe-pennyworth of Wit, in a Pennyworth of Paper. Or, The Hermites Tale. The third Impression*. 1613, 4to. At p. 16 of this poem is a tale said to be "in Skeltons rime"—to which, however, it bears no resemblance.—*The Shepheards Pipe* (by Browne and Withers,) 1614, 12mo, in Eglogue i., at sig. C 7,—*Hypercritica; or A Rule of Judgment for writing, or reading our History's*, &c. By Edmund Bolton, Author of *Nero Cæsar* (published by Dr. Anthony Hall together with *Nicolai Triveti Annalium Continuatio*, &c.), 1722, 8vo, at p. 235. At what period Bolton wrote this treatise is uncertain: he probably completed it about 1618; see Haslewood's Preface to *Anc. Crit. Essays*,

&c. ii. xvi.—*Poems: By Michael Drayton Esquire*, n.d. folio, at p. 288.—*The Golden Fleece Divided into three Parts, &c.*, by *Orpheus Junior* [Sir William Vaughan], 1626, 4to, at pp. 83, 88, 98, of the Third Part. In this piece "Scogin and Skelton" figure as "the chiefe Aduocates for the Dogrel Rimers by the procurement of Zoilus, Momus, and others of the Popish Sect."—*The Fortunate Isles, and their Union. Celebrated in a Masque designed for the Court, on the Twelfth-night*, 1626, by Ben Jonson. In this masque are introduced "Skogan and Skelton, in like habits as they lived:" see Jonson's *Works*, viii. ed. Gifford: see also his *Tale of a Tub* (licensed 1633), *Works*, vi. 231.—*Wit and Fancy In a Maze. Or the Incomparable Champion of Love and Beautie. A Mock-Romance, &c. Written originally in the British Tongue, and made English by a person of much Honor. Si foret in terris rideret Democritus.*<sup>1</sup> 1656, 12mo. In this romance (p. 101) we are told that "[In Elysium] the Brittish Bards (forsooth) were also ingaged in quarrel for Superiority; and who think you threw the Apple of Discord amongst them, but Ben Jonson, who had openly vaunted himself the first and best of English Poets . . . . Skelton, Gower, and the Monk of Bury were at Daggers-drawing for Chawcer:" and a marginal note on "Skelton" informs us that he was "Henry 4. his Poet Lawreat, who wrote disguises for the young Princes"!

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<sup>1</sup> Such is the title-page of the copy now before me: but some copies (see *Restituta*, iv. 196) are entitled *Don Zara del Fogo, &c.* 1656; and others *Romancio-Mastiz, or a Romance of Romances, &c.* By Samuel Holland. Gent. 1660.

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## APPENDIX II.

### LIST OF EDITIONS, &c.

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*Here begynneth a lytell treatyse named the bowge of courte.*

Colophon,

*Thus endeth the Bowge of courte. Enprynted at Westmynster By me Wynkyn the Worde. 4to, n.d.*

On the title-page is a woodcut of a fox and a bear.

*Here begynneth a lytell treatyse named the bowge of courte.*

Colophon,

*Thus endeth the Bowge of courte Enprynted at London By Wynken de Worde in flete strete, at the sygne of the sonne. 4to, n.d.*

On the title-page is a woodcut of three men and a woman.

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*Here folowethe dyuers Balettys and dyties solacyous deuysyd by Master Skelton Laureat.*

Colophon,

*Cum privilegio.*

4to, n.d., and without printer's name, but evidently from the press of Pynson. (Consisting of 4 leaves.)

On the title-page is a woodcut representing Skelton seated in his study, crowned with a laurel wreath, and over his head, "Arboris omne genus viridi concedite lauro" (see *Memoir*, p. lx. note.)

It contains—

The ballad, "My darlyng dere, my dayssy floure," &c.

The verses, "The auncient acquaintance, madam, between vs twayne," &c.

The verses, "Knolege, acquayntance, resort, fauour with grace," &c.

The Latin verses, "Cuncta licet cecidisse putas," &c., with an English translation, "Though ye suppose," &c.

The verses, "Go, pytyous hart, rasyd with dedly wo," &c.

*Skelton Laureate agaynste a comely Coystrowne that curiously chauntyd And curryshly countred, And madly in hys Musykkyss mokyshly made, Agaynste the .ix. Musys of polytyke Poems & Poetys matryculat.*

Colophon,

*Cum privilegio.*

4to, n.d., and without printer's name, but evidently from the press of Pynson. (Consisting of 4 leaves.)

On the title-page is a woodcut, the same as in the last mentioned tract, but with a different border.

It contains—

The verses mentioned in the title-page.

"Contra alia Cātitātē & Organisantē Asinum, qui impugnabat Skeltonida pierium Sarcasmos."

"Skelton Laureat uppon a deedmans hed y<sup>t</sup> was sent to hym from an honorable Jētyllwoman for a token Deuysyd this gostly medytacyon in Englysh Couenable in sentence Comēdable, Lamētable, Lacrymable, Profyttable for the soule."

The verses, "Womanhod, wanton, ye want," &c.

*Honorificatissimo, Amplissimo, longeque reuerendissimo in Christo patri: Ac domino, domino Thomas ꝑ. Tituli sanctæ Cecilie, sacrosanctæ Romanæ ecclesiæ presbytero Cardinali meritisimo, et Apostolicæ sedis legato. A latereque legato superillustri ꝑ. Skeltonis laureatus Ora, reg. Humillimum, dicat*

*obsequium cum omni debita reuerentia, tanto tamque magnifico digna principe sacerdotum, totiusque iustitie equabilissimo moderatore. Necnon presentis opusculi fautore excellentissimo ꝑc. Ad cuius auspiciatissimam contemplationem, sub memorabili prelo gloriose immortalitatis presens pagella felicitatur ꝑc.*

*A replicacion agaynst certayne yong scolers, abiured of late ꝑc.*

*Argumentum.*

*Crassantes nimium, Nimium sterilesque labruscas*

*(Vinea quas domini sabaoth non sustinet ultra*

*Lazius expandi) nostra est resicare voluntas.*

*Cum priuilegio a rege indulto.*

Colophon,

*Thus endeth the Replicacyon of Skel. L. ꝑc. Imprinted by Richard Pynson, printer to the kynges most noble grace. 4to, n.d.*

*A ryght delectable tratyse vpon a goodly Garlande or Chapelet of Laurell by mayster Skelton Poete laureat studiously dyuyssed at Sheryffhotton Castell. In y<sup>e</sup> foreste of gaitres, wher in ar cōprysyde many ꝑ dyuers solacyons ꝑ ryght pregnant allectyues of syngular pleasure, as more at large it doth apere in y<sup>e</sup> proces folowynge.*

Colophon,

*Here endith a ryght delectable tratyse vpon a goodly garlande or chapelet of laurell dyuyssed by mayster Skelton Poete laureat.*

*Imprynted by me Rycharde faukes dwellydyg [sic] in durā rent or els in Powllis chyrche yerde at the sygne of the A. B. C. The yere of our lorde god .m.cccccc.xxiiii. The .iii. day of Octobre, 4to.*

On the title-page is a woodcut representing Skelton seated in his study, and on the reverse of the title-page a woodcut (copied from a French print—see *Memoir*, p. lx. note,)—a whole-length figure of a man holding a branch in one hand

and a flower in the other,—having at top the words “Skelton Poeta,” and at bottom the following verses;

*Eterno mansura die dum sidera fulgent  
Equora dumq; tument hec laurea nostra virebit.  
Hinc nostrum celebre et nomē referetur ad astra  
Vndiq; Skeltonis memorabitur altera donis [alter Adonis].*

On the reverse of A ii. are small woodcuts of “The quene of Fame” and “Dame Pallas.” After the colophon is the device of the printer, “Richard Fakes.”

*Magnyfycence, A goodly interlude and a mery deuysed and made by mayster Skelton poet laureate late deceasyd.*

Colophon, *Cum privilegio.*

folio, n.d., and without printer's name.

This edition was in all probability from Rastell's press.

*Here after foloweth the boke of Phyllip Sparowe compyled by mayster Skelton Poete Laureate.*

Colophon,

*Printed at London at the poultry by Rycharde Kele.*

12mo, n.d. On reverse of the last leaf is a woodcut representing Phyllip Sparowe's tomb.

An edition by Kele, 4to, n.d., is mentioned in *Typogr. Antiq.* iv. 805, ed. Dibdin: but qy.?

*Here after foloweth a litle booke of Phyllip Sparow, compyled by Mayster Skelton Poete Laureate.*

Colophon,

*Imprynted at London in paules churche yerde by Robert Toy.*

12mo, n.d. On reverse of the last leaf is the same woodcut as in the ed. last described.

*Here after foloweth a litle boke of Phillip sparow. Compyled by mayster Skelton Poete Laureate.*

Colophon,

*Imprinted at London in poules churchyard, at the sygne of the Sunne, by Antony Kitson.*

Colophon in some copies,

*Imprinted at London in poules churchyard at the sygne of the Lamb, by Abraham Weale [sic].*

Colophon in some other copies,

*Imprinted at London in Foster-lane by Thon Walley.*

12mo, n.d.

An edition *Imprinted at London in paules church yerde by John Wyght*, with a woodcut of "Phyllyp Sparowes tomb" on the last page, is mentioned in *Typogr. Antiq.* iv. 379. ed. Dibdin.

*Here after foloweth certaine bokes cōpyled by mayster Skelton, Poet Laureat, whose names here after shall appere.*

*Speake Parot.*

*The death of the noble Prynce Kyng Edward the fourth.*

*A treatyse of the Scottes.*

*Ware the Hawke.*

*The Tunnyng of Elymoure Rummyng.*

Colophon,

*Thus endeth these lytle workes compyled by maister Skelton Poet Laureat.*

*Imprynted at London, in Crede Lane, by John Kyngs and Thomas Marche.*

12mo, n.d.

*Heare after foloweth certain bokes Compyled by Master Skelton, Poet Laureat, whose names here after doth appere.*

(Enumeration of pieces as above.)

*Imprynted at London by Thon Day.*

Colophon,

*Thus endeth these litle works compiled by maister Skelton, Poet Laureat.*

12mo, n.d.

*Here after foloweth certayne bokes, cōpyled by mayster Skelton, Poet Laureat, whose names here after shall appere.*  
(Enumeration of pieces as above.)

*Printed at London by Richard Lant, for Henry Tab, dwelling in Pauls churchyard, at the sygne of Judith.*

Colophon,

*Thus endethe these lytell workes cōpyled by mayster Skelton Poet Laureat. And prynted by Richard Lant, for Henry Tab, dwelling in Poules churche yard at the sygne of Judith.*

12mo, n.d. On the fly-leaf of the copy which I used, but perhaps not belonging to it, was pasted a woodcut representing the author, with the words "Skelton Poet" (copied from Pynson's ed. of *Dyvers Balettye*, &c., and the same as that on the reverse of the last leaf of Kele's ed. of *Why come ye nat to Courte*.)

An edition printed for *W. Bonham*, 1547, 12mo, is mentioned by Warton, *Hist. of E. P.* ii. 336 (note,) ed. 4to.

The various editions of these "certaine bokes" contain, besides the pieces specified on the title-page, the following poems—

"All noble men, of this take hede," &c. [prefixed to the eds. of *Why come ye nat to Courte*.]

"Howe euery thing must haue a tyme."

"Prayer to the Father of Heauen."

"To the seconde Person."

"To the Holy Ghost."

*Here after foloweth a litle boke called Colym Cloute cōpyled by mayster Skelton poete Laureate.*

*Quis cōsurgat mecū aduersus malignantes, aut quis stabit mecū aduersus operantes iniquitatem. Nemo domine.*



Colophon,  
*Imprynted at London by me Rycharde Kele dwelling in the  
 poultry at the long shop vnder saynt Myldredes chyrche.*

12mo, n.d.

An edition by Kele, 4to, n.d., is mentioned in *Typogr. Antiq.*  
 iv. 305. ed. Dibdin: but qy.?

*Here after foloweth a litle booke called Colyn Clout compiled  
 by master Skelton Poete Laureate.*

*Quis cōsurgat*, &c. (as above.)

Colophon,  
*Imprynted at London in Paules Churche yards at the Sygne of  
 the Rose by Iohn Wychte.*

12mo, n.d.

*Here after foloweth a litle boke called Colyn Clout compiled by  
 master Skelton Poete Laureate.*

*Quis cōsurgat*, &c. (as above.)

Colophon,  
*Imprynted at London in Paules Churche yards at the Sygne  
 of the Summe by Anthony Kytson.*

Colophon in some copies,

*Imprynted at London in Paules Churche yards at the Sygne  
 of the Lambe by Abraham Veale.*

12mo, n.d.

An edition *Imprynted at London* by — [Thomas Godfray.]  
*Om privilegio regali*, is mentioned in *Typogr. Antiq.* iii. 71.  
 ed. Dibdin.

*Here after foloweth a lytell boke, whiche hath to name, Why,  
 come ye nat to courte, compiled by mayster Skelton poete Lau-  
 reate.*

Colophon,  
*Imprynted at london by me Richard kele dwelling in the poultry  
 at the longe shop vnder saynt myldredes chyrch.*

12mo, n.d. On the reverse of the title-page is a woodcut

representing two figures, one of them perhaps meant for Wolsey, the other headed "Skelton;" and on the reverse of the last leaf is a woodcut (copied from Pynson's ed of *Dyuers Balettys*, &c.) with the words "Skylton poyet."

An edition by Kele, 4to, n.d., is mentioned in *Typogr. Antiq.* iv. 805. ed. Dibdin: but qy.?

*Here after foloweth a litle booke, whiche hath to name Whi come ye not to courte, compiled by mayster Skellō Poete Laureate.*

Colophon,

*Imprynted at London in Paules churche yarde at the Sygne of the Rose by John Wyght.*

12mo, n.d. On the reverse of the title-page is a woodcut, which I am unable to describe, because in the copy used by me it was much damaged as well as pasted over.

*Here after foloweth a litle boke whyche hathe to name, whye come ye not to Courte. Compyled by mayster Skelton Poete Laureate.*

Colophon,

*Imprynted at London in Poules church yard at the syne of the sunne by Anthony Kytson.*

Colophon in some copies,

*Imprynted at London in Poules church yard at the syne of the Lamb by Abraham Veale.*

Colophon in some other copies,

*Imprynted at London in Foster lane by John Wallye.*

12mo, n.d.

An edition, *Imprynted at London, in Paules church yarde at the Sygne of the Bell by Robert Toy*, is mentioned in *Typogr. Antiq.* iii. 576. ed. Dibdin.

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*Pithy pleasant and profitable workes of maister Skelton, Poete Laureate. Nowe collected and newly published. Anno 1568. Imprinted at London in Fletestreate, neare unto saint Dunstones church by Thomas Marthe. 12mo.*

On the reverse of the title-page are the Latin lines, "Salve, plus decies," &c. (see vol. i. 197); next, Churchyard's verses, "If slouth and tract of time," &c. (see Appendix I. p. xciv); and then the contents of the volume are thus enumerated;

*"Workes of Skelton newly collected by I. S. as foloweth.*

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. The crowne of lawrel.   | 15. Colyn Clout.  |
| 2. The bouge of court.   | 16. Philip sparowe.   |
| 3. The duke of Albany.   | 17. Of a comly Coystrowne.  |
| 4. Speake parrot.  | [Contra alium Cantitatem & Organisantem Asinam, &c.]              |
| 5. Edward the fourth.  | 18. Upō a deadmās heed.   |
| 6. Against the Scottes.  | 19. To maistris Anne.   |
| [Chorus de Dys contra Scottes, &c.                               | 20. Of thre foolcs.   |
| Chorus de dis, &c. super triumphali victoria contra gallos, &c.] | 21. En parlement a Paris.   |
| 7. Ware the hauke.   | 22. Epitaphes of two knaues of dise.                              |
| [Libertas veneranda, &c.   | [Diligo rusticum, &c.]  |
| All noble men of this take hede, &c.]                            | 23. Lamentation for Norwiche.                                     |
| 8. Howe euery thinge must haue a time.                           | 24. Against y <sup>e</sup> Scottes [i. e. against Dundas].        |
| 9. A prayer to the father of heauen.                             | 25. Praise of y <sup>e</sup> palmtre. [Diligo rusticum, &c.]      |
| 10. To y <sup>e</sup> second person.                             | 26. Bedel quōdā Belial.   |
| 11. To the holy ghost.   | 27. The dolorus death of the Lord Percie Erle of Northumberlande. |
| 12. The tunning of Elinour Rumming.                              | [Ad magistrum Rukshaw.]   |
| 13. The relucēt mirror.  |   |
| 14. Why come ye not to court.                                    |   |

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 28. Epitaphium Margarete<br>countisse de Derbi. | 31. A parable by William<br>Cornishe in y <sup>e</sup> Fleete. |
| 29. Epita. Hen. septi.                          | 32. Against venomous<br>tongues.                               |
| 30. Eulogium pro suorum<br>temporum.            | 33. Of Calliope.   |

How the very dull poem (31) by William Cornishe came to be inserted in this collection, I know not: but I may just observe that it is found (with a better text) in *MS. Reg.* 18. D. ii. where it immediately precedes Skelton's verses on the Death of the Earl of Northumberland.

"Now synge we, as we were wont," &c.—in an imperfect volume (or fragments of volumes) of black-letter *Christmas Carolles*,—*Bibliograph. Miscell.* (edited by the Rev. Dr. Bliss,) 1813, 4to, p. 48.

Concerning the comparatively modern edition of *Elynour Rummynges*, 1624, 4to (celebrated for the imaginary portrait of Elynour,) see Notes, vol. iii. 88 sqq.

Wood mentions as by Skelton (*Ath. Oxon.* i. 52. ed. Bliss)—*Poetical Fancies and Satyra*, Lond. 1512, Oct.  
Tanner mentions (*Biblioth.* p. 676)—*Miseries of England under Henry vii.* Lond. . . . 4to. [Qy. is it the same piece as *Vox Populi, Vox Dei*?]  
Warton mentions (*Hist. of E. P.* ii. 386, note, ed. 4to)—  
A collection of Skelton's pieces printed for A. Scolocker, 1682, 12mo.

Bliss mentions (add. to Wood's *Ath. Ozon.* i. 53)—

A collection of Skelton's pieces *printed* in 12mo by *A. Scho-  
laker*, n.d., and

Another by *John Wight* in 8vo, 1588.

Of Skelton's drama, *The Nigramansir*, the following account is given by Warton:—

"I cannot quit Skelton, of whom I yet fear too much has been already said, without restoring to the public notice a play, or MORALITY, written by him, not recited in any catalogue of his works, or annals of English typography; and, I believe, at present totally unknown to the antiquarians in this sort of literature. It is, *The NIGRAMANSIR, a morall ENTERLUDE and a pitie written by Maister SKELTON laureate and plaied before the king and other estatys at Woodstoke on Palmes Sunday*. It was printed by Wynkin de Worde in a thin quarto, in the year 1504.<sup>1</sup> It must have been presented before king Henry the seventh, at the royal manor or palace, at Woodstock in Oxfordshire, now destroyed. The characters are a Necromancer or conjurer, the devil, a notary public, Simonie, and Philargyria or Avarice. It is partly a satire on some abuses in the church; yet not without a due regard to decency, and an apparent respect for the dignity of the audience. The story, or plot, is the tryal of SIMONY and AVARICE: the devil is the judge, and the notary public acts

<sup>1</sup> "My lamented friend Mr. William Collins, whose Odes will be remembered while any taste for true poetry remains, shewed me this piece at Chichester, not many months before his death: and he pointed it out as a very rare and valuable curiosity. He intended to write the HISTORY OF THE RESTORATION OF LEARNING UNDER LEO THE TENTH, and with a view to that design, had collected many scarce books. Some few of these fell into my hands at his death. The rest, among which, I suppose, was this INTERLUDE, were dispersed."

as an assessor or scribe. The prisoners, as we may suppose, are found guilty, and ordered into hell immediately. There is no sort of propriety in calling this play the Necromancer: for the only business and use of this character, is to open the subject in a long prologue, to evoke the devil, and summon the court. The devil kicks the necromancer, for waking him so soon in the morning: a proof that this drama was performed in the morning, perhaps in the chapel of the palace. A variety of measures, with shreds of Latin and French, is used: but the devil speaks in the octave stanza. One of the stage-directions is, *Enter Balsebub with a Berde*. To make him both frightful and ridiculous, the devil was most commonly introduced on the stage wearing a visard with an immense beard. Philargyria quotes Seneca and saint Austin: and Simony offers the devil a bribe. The devil rejects her offer with much indignation: and swears by the *foule Eumenides*, and the hoary beard of Charon, that she shall be well fried and roasted in the unfathomable sulphur of Cocytus, together with Mahomet, Pontius Pilate, the traitor Judas, and king Herod. The last scene is closed with a view of hell, and a dance between the devil and the necromancer. The dance ended, the devil trips up the necromancer's heels, and disappears in fire and smoke." *Hist. of E. P.* ii. 360. ed. 4to.

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In the *Garlande of Laurell* (vol. ii. 221, sqq.) Skelton enumerates many of his compositions which are no longer extant.

#### PIECES ATTRIBUTED TO SKELTON.

*Verses presented to King Henry the Seventh at the feast of St. George celebrated at Windsor in the third year of his reign*—first printed by Ashmole (see vol. ii. 345 of the present work.)

*The Epitaffe of the moste noble and valyaunt Jaspas late Duke of Beddeforde*, printed by Pynson, 4to, n.d. (see vol. ii. 347.)

*Elegy on King Henry the Seventh*—an imperfect broadside (see vol. ii. 362.)

*Merie Tales Newly Imprinted & made by Master Skelton Poet Laureat. Imprinted at London in Fleetstreet beneath the Conduit at the signe of S. John Euangelist, by Thomas Colwell, 12mo, n.d. (see the preceding Appendix.)* Warton, *Hist. of E. P.* ii. 336 (note,) gives the date 1575 to these tales,—on what authority I know not.

Other pieces might be mentioned.

## MSS.

*Of the death of the noble prince, Kyngge Edwards the forth.* In a vol. belonging to Miss Richardson Currur, which has furnished a stanza hitherto unprinted (vol. i. 8.)

*Vpon the doulourous delthe and muche lamentable chaunce of the most honorable Erle of Northumberlande.* *MS. Reg. 18 D ii.* fol. 165 (vol. i. 8.)

*Manerly Margery Mylk and Ale.* *Fairfax MS.—Add. MSS.* (Brit. Mus.) 5465, fol. 109 (vol. i. 85.)

*Poems against Garnesche.* *MS. Harl.* 367, fol. 101. Now for the first time printed (vol. i. 132.)

"*Wofully araid,*" &c. *Fairfax MS.—Add. MSS.* 5465, fol. 76 and fol. 86 (Brit. Mus.): and MS. copy in a very old hand on the fly-leaves of *Boetius de Discip. Schol. cum notabili commento, Darentrie*, 1496, 4to (in the collection of the late Mr. Heber,) which has supplied several stanzas hitherto unprinted (vol. i. 165.)

"*I, liber, et prospera, regem tu pronus adora,*" &c. *MS. C. C. C.*—No. ccccxxxii. of Nasmith's *Catal.* p. 400 (vol. i. 172.)

"*Salve plus decies quam sunt momenta dierum,*" &c. *Add. MSS.* (Brit. Mus.) 4787, fol. 224 (vol. i. 197.)

*Colyn Cloute.* *MS. Harl.* 2252, fol. 147 (vol. ii. 125.)—In *MS. Lansdown* 762, fol. 75, is a fragment of this poem, "The prophecy of Skelton" (vol. ii. 141.)

*Garlande of Laurell. MS. Cott. Vit. E X. fol. 200; very imperfect (vol. ii. 170.)*

*Speke, Parrot. MS. Harl. 2252, fol. 133, which has supplied much now for the first time printed (vol. ii. 245.)*

*Diodorus Siculus translated into English [by Skelton poet-laureat]. MS. C. C. C.—No. ccclvii. of Nasmith's Catal. p. 362.*

For the following account of this MS. I am indebted to Mr. Thomas Wright:—

“MS. Corp. Chr. Camb. No. 357.

At the head of the first folio—‘Interpretatio Skeltoni poetæ Laureati,’ written in a different hand from the MS. (by Nasmith said to be by Archb. Parker himself) over something which has been erased, but which seems to have been ‘Prohemye of Poggius.’

At the end of this preface is written in the same hand as MS. ‘Thus endeth the prohemye of Poggius.’ fol. 2 verso.

At fol. 3 begins ‘The prohemye of Diodorus thanetour.’ This ends at fol. 7 thus,—

¶ ‘Now we wyll enforce to begynne our processe historyall. quod Skelton.

¶ Here endeth the prohemye of all the hole processe.’

The words ‘quod Skelton’ are written in rather a different hand, and with different ink, but apparently contemporary. I think it not impossible that they may have been added by the original hand at another time.

It is imperfect at the end: but on a leaf bound up with it is written in a much later hand (perhaps by Parker,) ‘Hec charta de industria vacua relicta est, ut occasio daretur juveni in litteris exercitato aggrediendi translationem historię que hic diminuta est, ut sic humeri sui vires experiatur quid ferre valeant, quidve recusent, tum cognoscet quid hic translator prestiterit, fortassis non ita facile in hoc genere a multis superandus.’”

Tanner (*Biblioth.* p. 676. ed. 1748) mentions the following two pieces as extant in his day among the MSS. of Lincoln Cathedral Library (see *Memoir*, pp. xxi, xxiii.)—

*Methodus Skeltonicis laureati, sc. Præcepta quadam moralia Henrico principi, postea Henr. viii, missa, Dat. apud Eltham A.D. mdi. Principium deest.*



*Carmen ad principem, quando insignitus erat ducis Ebor. titulo.*  
Pr. "Si quid habes, mea Musa."

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## MSS. OF PIECES ATTRIBUTED TO SKELTON.

*Vox Populi, vox Dei.* MS. 2567 Cambridge Public Library.  
*MS. Harl. 367.* fol. 130 (see vol. ii. 364.)  
*The Image of Ipocrysy.* MS. Lansdown 794 (see vol. ii. 388.)

Other pieces might be mentioned.

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## APPENDIX III.

### EXAMPLES

OF

### THE METRE CALLED SKELTONICAL.

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*The Genealogie of Heresye. Compyled by Ponce Pantolabus. Imprynted at London In Pater noster rowe. At the signe of our ladye pytye [some copies, our fadyr Pyte] By Johan Redman. Ad imprimendum solum, 1542: another edition was printed by Robert Wyer: vide *Typograph. Antiq.* iii. 59, 182. ed. Dibdin (the size of them not mentioned.) The author was John Huntingdon.*

These editions I have not seen: the whole of the tract, however, seems to be quoted in *A mysterye of iniquyte contayned within the heretycall Genealogye of Ponce Pantolabus, is here both dysclosed & confuted By Johan Bale An. M.D.XLII.* 12mo, Geneva, 1545, from which I subjoin the following passages:

“ Blynde obstynacye  
Begate heresye,  
By a myschaunce,  
Of dame ignoraunce.  
Heresye begate  
Stryfe and debate.

Debate and ambycyon  
 Begate supersticyon.  
 Supersticion playne  
 Begate disdayne.  
 Dysdayne of trowthe  
 Begate slowthe.  
 Slowthe & sluggishnesse  
 Begate wyfulnessse.  
 Wyfulnessse, verelye  
 Nygh cosyne to heresyse,  
 Begate myschefe,  
 Father of Wyclefe,  
 Which ded bringe inne  
 His grandfather synne.  
 After this brother  
 Came forth an other;  
 His name to discusse,  
 Menne called him Husse;  
 He and his cumpanye  
 Began in Germanye.  
 And after that  
 Came in a gnat  
 Of the same kynde,  
 Whose sowle is blynde;  
 His name you shall here,  
 Menne call him Luthere.  
 He by his meane  
 Hath bannyshed cleane  
 Out of that coste  
 The Holye Ghoste,  
 And hath brought inne  
 Lyberte and synne.  
 Next after him,  
 Is his chefe lym  
 One Melanchtonus,  
*Nequaquam bonus.*  
 Next after this whelp  
 Came in to helpe

One Oecolampadius,  
With his brother Zuinglius.

. . . . .  
And for this tyme  
Here endeth my ryme,  
The Genealogye  
Of stynkyng heresy:  
Wherin I requyre  
And humblye desyre  
All menne ywys  
That shall rede this,  
Above all thinge  
To praye for our kynge,  
And the quene also  
Where so euer she go,  
And for the sauegarde  
Of our prince Edwarde,  
Whom I praye Jesu  
Longe to contynewe!  
Amen."

---

*From A pore helpe.*

*The bukler and defence  
Of mother holy kyrke,  
And weapē to driue hence  
Al that against her wircke.*

12mo, without date or printer's name.

"Wyll none in all this lande  
Step forth and take in hande  
These felowes to withstande,  
In nombre lyke the sande,  
That with the Gospell melles,  
And wyll do nothyng elles  
But tratyng tales telles

Agaynst our holy prelace  
 And holy churches dygnitie,  
 Sayinge it is but papistrie,  
 Yea, fayned and hipocrisy,  
 Erronious and heresy,  
 And taketh theyr auctoritie  
 Out of the holy Euangelie,  
 All customes ceremoniall  
 And rytes ecclesiasticall,  
 Not grounded on Scripture,  
 No longer to endure?  
 And thus, ye maye be sure,  
 The people they alure  
 And drawe them from your lore,  
 The whiche wyll greve you sore;  
 Take hede, I saye, therfore,  
 Your nede was neuer more.  
 But sens ye be so slacke,  
 It greueth me, alacke,  
 To heare behynde your backe  
 Howe they wyll carpe and cracke,  
 And none of you that dare  
 With <sup>1</sup> one of them compare.  
 Yet some there be that are  
 So bolde to shewe theyr ware,  
 And is no priest nor deacon,  
 And yet wyll fyre his becone  
 Agaynst suche fellows frayle,  
 Make out with tothe and nayle,  
 And hoyste vp meyne sayle,  
 And manfully to fyght,  
 In holy prelates ryght,  
 With penne and ynke and paper,  
 And lyke no trifynge iaper  
 To touche these felowes indede

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<sup>1</sup> *With*] Old ed. "Whiche."

With all expedient spede,  
And not before it nede:  
And I indede am he  
That wayteth for to se  
Who dare so hardy be  
To encounter here with me;  
I stande here in defence  
Of some that be far hence,  
And can both blysse and sence,  
And also vndertake  
Ryght holy thynges to make,  
Yea, God within a cake;  
And who so that forsake  
His breade shall be dowe bake;  
I openly professe  
The holy blyssed masse  
Of strength to be no lesse  
Then it was at the fyrst:  
But I wolde se who durst  
Set that amonge the worst,  
For he shulde be accurst  
With boke, bell, and candell,  
And so I wolde hym handell  
That he shulde ryght well knowe  
Howe to escape, I trowe,  
So hardy on his heade,  
Deprave our holy breade,  
Or els to prate or patter  
Agaynst our holy watter.  
This is a playne matter,  
It nedeth not to flatter:  
They be suche holy thynges  
As hath ben vsed with kynges;  
And yet these lewde loselles,  
That bragge vpon theyr Gospelles,  
At ceremonies swelles,  
And at our christined belles,  
And at our longe gownes,  
And at your shauen crownes,

**cxxviii      EXAMPLES OF THE METRE**

And at your typ[il]tes fyne,  
 The ianelles wyll repyne.  
 They saye ye leade euyl lyues  
 With other mennes wyues,  
 And wyll none of your owne,  
 And so your sede is sowne  
 In other mennes grounde,  
 True wedlocke to confounde;  
 Thus do they rayle and raue,  
 Callynge euery priest knaue,  
 That loueth messe to saye,  
 And after ydle all daye:  
 They wolde not haue you playe  
 To dryue the tyme awaye,  
 But brabble on the Byble,  
 Whiche is but impossible  
 To be learned in all your lyfe;  
 Yet therin be they ryfe,  
 Whiche maketh all this stryfe," &c.

---

*From The Vpcheringe of the Messe: Imprinted at Lodon by  
 John Daye and Willyam Seres, 12mo, n.d.*

" Who hath not known or herd  
 How we were made afeard  
 That, magre of our beard,  
 Our messe shulde cleane awaye,  
 That we did dayly saye,  
 Aud vtterly decaye  
 For euer and for aye?  
 So were we brought in doubt  
 That all that are deuout  
 Were like to go withoute  
 The messe that hath no peere,  
 Which longe hath taried here,  
 Yea, many an hundreth yere,

And to be destitute  
Of that whiche constitute  
Was of the highe depute  
Of Christe and his apostles;  
Althoughe none of the Gospels  
No mention maketh or tells,  
We must belue (what ells?)  
Of things done by councells,  
Wherein the high professours,  
Apostlique successours,  
Take holde to be possessours;  
And some were made confessours;  
Some of them were no startars,  
But were made holi martars:  
Yet plowmen, smythes, & cartars,  
With such as be their hartars,  
Will enterprise to taxe  
Thes auneynt mens actes  
And holy fathers factes.  
Thoughe messe were made bi men,  
As popes nyne or ten,  
Or many more, what then?  
Or not of Scripture groundred,  
Is yt therfore confounded  
To be a supersticion?  
Nay, nay, they mysse the quission:  
Make better inquyssicion;  
Ye haue an enyll condicion  
To make suche exposition;  
Ye thinke nothings but Scripture  
Is only clene and pure;  
Yes, yes, I you ensure,  
The messe shalbe hir better,  
As light as ye do set hir.  
The Scripture hath nothing  
Wherby profyte to bryng,  
But a lytyll preaching,  
With tattling and teaching;



And nothing can ye espie  
Nor se with outwarde eye,  
But must your ears applie  
To learnyng inwardlye;  
And who so it will folowe,  
In goods though he may walow,  
If Scripture once him swalowe,  
She wyll vndo him holowe;  
Wherefore no good mes singers  
Will come within hir fyngers,  
But are hir vnder styngers,  
For she wolde fayne vndo  
All such as lyueth so.

To the messe she is an enmye,  
And wolde distroye hir vtterlye,  
Wer not for sum that frendfully  
In time of nede will stand hir by.  
Yet is the messe and she as lyke  
As a Christian to an heretike:  
The messe hath holy vestures,  
And many gay gestures,  
And decked with clothe of golde,  
And vesselle many folde,  
Right galaunt to beholde,  
More then may well be tolde,  
With basen, ewer, and towell,  
And many a pretty jwelle,  
With goodly candellstyckes,  
And many proper tryckys,  
With cruetts gilt and chalys,  
Wherat some men haue malice,  
With sensers, and with pax,  
And many other knackys,  
With patent, and with corporas,  
The fynest thing that euer was.  
Alasse, is it not pitie  
That men be no more wittye  
But on the messe to iest,  
Of all suche thinge the best?

For if she were supprest,  
A pyn for all the rest.

. . . . .

A, good mestres Missa,  
Shal ye go from vs thissa?  
Wel, yet I muste ye kissa:  
Alacke, for payne I pyssa,  
To se the mone here issa,  
Because ye muste departe!  
It greueth many a herte  
That ye should from them start:  
But what then? tushe, a farte!  
Sins other shifte is none,  
But she must neades be gone,  
Nowe let vs synge eche one,  
Boeth Jak and Gyll and Jone,  
*Requiem eternam,*  
*Lest penam sempiternam*  
*For vitam supernam,*  
*And vmbra infernam*  
*For veram lucernam,*  
She chaunce to enherite,  
According to hir merite.

*Pro cuius memoria*  
Ye maye wel be soria;  
Full smale maye be your *gloria*,  
When ye shal heare thys storia;  
Then wil ye crie and roria,  
We shal se <sup>1</sup> hir no moria:  
*Et dicam vobis quare*  
She may no longer *stare*,  
Nor here with you *regnare*,  
But trudge *ad ultra mare*,  
And after *habitare*  
*In regno Plutonico*  
*Et euo acronyco,*

---

<sup>1</sup> *se*] Old ed. "so."

*Cum cetu Babilonico*  
*Et cantu diabolico,*  
 With pollers and piller[s],  
 And al hir well willers,  
 And ther to dwel euer:  
 And thus wil I leaue hir."

---

From *Phylogamus*, 12mo, without date or printer's name—of which the title-page and five leaves are preserved in a volume of Ballads and Fragments in the British Museum. The late Mr. Douce has written below the title-page "Probably by Skelton;" but it is certainly not his.

" Gyus place, ye poetes fine,  
 Bow doune now & encline;  
 For nowe y<sup>e</sup> Muses nyne,  
 So sacred and diuine  
 In Parnase holy hyll  
 Haue wrought theyr worthy wyll,  
 And by theyr goodly skyl  
 Vppon that myghty mountayne  
 In Hellycons fountayne, &c.

. . . . .  
 O poete so impudent,  
 Whyche neuer yet was studente,  
 To thee the goddes prudente  
 Minerua is illudente!  
 Thou wrytest thynges dyffuse,  
 Incongrue and confuse,  
 Obfuscate and obtuse;  
 No man the lyke doth use  
 Among the Turckes or Jewes;  
 Alwayes inuentyng newes  
 That are incomparable,  
 They be so fyrme and stable:

Lyke as a shyppe is able,  
Wythout ancre and cable,  
Roother, maste, or sayle,  
Pully, rope, or nayle,  
In wynde, weather, or hayle,  
To gnyde both top and tayle,  
And not the course to fayle;  
So thys our poet maye,  
Wythout a stopp or staye,  
In cunnyng wend the way,  
As wel by darke as day,  
And neuer go astray,  
Yf yt be as they saye.  
O poet rare and recent,  
Dedecorate and indecent,  
Insolent and insensate,  
Contendyng and condensate,  
Obtused and obturate,  
Obumbylate, obdurate,  
Sparyng no priest or curate,  
Cyuylyan or rurate,  
That be alredy married,  
And from theyr vow bene varied,  
Wherto the Scrypture them caried!  
They myght as wel haue taryed;  
I sweare by the north doore rood,  
That stowte was whyle he stood,  
That they had bene as good  
To haue solde theyr best blew hood;  
For I am in suche a moode,  
That for my power and parte,  
Wyth all my wyt and arte,  
Wyth whole intent and harte,  
I wyl so at them darte," &c.

---

*The Coppe of a letter, sent by John Bradford to the right honorable lordes the Erles of Arundel, Darbie, Shrewsbury, & Penbroke, declaring the nature of spaniards, and discovering the most detestable treasons, whiche they have pretended moste falselye againe our moste noble kyngdome of Englande. Whereunto is added a tragical blast of the papisticall trôpet for mayntenaunce of the Popes kingdome in Englande. by. T. E. If ye beleue the trueth, ye save your times, &c.* 12mo, and without date or printer's name on the title-page: the copy now before me is imperfect at the end, where perhaps both are given. According to Herbert's *Ames's Typ. Antiq.* iii. 1582, this piece was printed in 1555.

In the two subjoined passages (perhaps in more) of this tract, the author adopts the Skeltonic metre, though the whole is printed as prose:—

“ There be many other noble menne [among the Spaniards, besides the duke of Medena-zelie] vndoubtedly very wise and politik, which can throughe their wisdom binde themselves for a time from their nature, and applye their condicions to the maners of those menne with whom they would gladlye bee frended; whose mischeuouse maners a man shal neuer knowe, till he come vnder their subiection. But then shall ye perceiue perfectly their puffed pride, with many mischeffes beside, their prowling and poling, their bribinge and shauing, their most deceitfull dealing, their bragging and boasting, their flatteringe and faininge, their abominable whore-huntynge, with most rufull ruling, | their doings vniust, | with insaciate lust, | their stout stubbernes, | croked crabbednes, | and vnmeasurable madnes, | in enui, pride, and lecherie, | which, thei saie, God loueth hartelie, | vaine glorie and hipocrisie, | with al other vilanie | of what kinde soeuer it be; | supersticion, desolacion, extorcion, adulation, dissimulation, exaltacion, suppression, inuocacion, and all abominacion; with innumerable moe mischeues, whiche I coulde plainlie declare, that no nacion in the world can suffer. Their masking and mumbling | in the holi time of lent | maketh

many wiues brente, | the king being present, | nighte after  
 nighte, | as a prince of moste mighte, | which hath power in  
 his hande | that no man dare withstande: | yet if that were  
 the greatest euill, | we might suffer it wel, | for there is no  
 man liuing | but would suffer the king | to haue wife, sister,  
 doughter, maide and all, | bothe great & smal, | so many as  
 he liste, | no man would him resist; | but the worst of all the  
 companie | must haue my wife priuelie, | when I am present  
 bi; | this is more vilanie, | that one muste kepe the dore; |  
 will not that greue you sore? | & dare not speake for your  
 life, | when another hath youre wife," | &c. Sig. B i.

"Ye wil say, the Spaniards kepe their olde rentaking:  
 how can that be, when euery poore man must pay yerely for  
 euery chimney in his house, and euery other place that is to  
 make fire in, as ouen, fornes, and smithes forge, a Frenche  
 crowne? wil Englishmen, or can thei, suffer to be poled and  
 pilled moste miserably, in payeng continually suche poling  
 pence and intollerable tollages for all maner graine and breade,  
 befe, beare and mutton, goose, pigge and capone, henne, mal-  
 lard and chicken, milk, butter and chese, egges, apples &  
 pearres, | wine white and reade, | with all other wines beside, |  
 salt white and graye? | al thinges must pay; | small nuttes  
 and wallnuttes, | cherries and chestnuttes, | plumbees, damas-  
 sens, philbeardes, and al | both gret & smal, | whatsouer thei  
 maye se, | to fede the pore commenalte; | salmon and hear-  
 ing; | this is a shamefull thing; | tench, ele or conger; | this  
 shall kepe vs vnder, | and make vs die for hunger; | flounders,  
 floucke, plaice or carpe; | here is a miserable warke | that  
 Englande must abide | to maintaine Spanishe pride," &c.  
 Sig. F ii.

---

*From Doctor Double Ale*,—12mo, without printer's name or date.

“ Although I lacke intelligence,  
And can not skylle of eloquence,  
Yet wyll I do my diligence  
To say sumthing or I go hence,  
Wherein I may demonstrate  
The figure, gesture, and estate  
Of one that is a curate,  
That harde is and endure, and  
And earnest in the cause  
Of piuish popish lawes,  
That are not worth two strawes,  
Except it be with dawes,  
That knoweth not good from euels,  
Nor Gods worde from the deuels,  
Nor wyll in no wise heare  
The worde of God so cleare,  
But popishnes vpreare,  
And make the pope Gods peare.

. . . . .

Now let vs go about  
To tell the tale out  
Of this good fellow stout,  
That for no man wyll dout,  
But kepe his olde condicions  
For all the newe comysions,  
And vse his supersticions,  
And also mens tradycions,  
And syng for dead folkes soules,  
And reade hys beaderolles,  
And all such thinges wyll vse  
As honest men refuse:  
But take hym for a cruse,  
And ye wyll tell me newes;  
For if he ons begyn,  
He leaueth nought therin;

He careth not a pyn  
 How much ther be wythin,  
 So he the pot may wyn,  
 He wyll it make full thyn;  
 And wher the drinke doth please  
 There wyll he take his ease,  
 And drinke therof his fyll,  
 Tyll ruddy be his byll;  
 And fyll both cup and can,  
 Who is so glad a man  
 As is our curate than?  
 I wolde ye knewe it, a curate  
 Not far without Newgate;  
 Of a parysh large  
 The man hath mikle charge,  
 And none within this border  
 That kepeth such order,  
 Nor one a this syde Nauerne  
 Louyth better the ale tauerne:  
 But if the drinke be small,  
 He may not well withall;  
 Tush, cast it on the wall!  
 It fretteth out his gall;  
 Then seke an other house,  
 This is not worth a louse,  
 As dronken as a mouse,  
*Monsyre gybet a vous!*  
 And ther wyll byb and bouse,  
 Tyll heuy be his brouse.

. . . . .  
 Thus may ye beholde  
 This man is very bolde,  
 And in his learning olde  
 Intendeth for to syt:  
 I blame hym not a whyt,  
 For it wolde vexe his wyt,  
 And cleane agaynst his earning,  
 To folow such learning



As now a dayes is taught;  
 It wolde sone bryng to naught  
 His olde popish brayne,  
 For then he must agayne  
 Apply hym to the schole,  
 And come away a fole,  
 For nothing shulde he get,  
 His brayne hath bene to het  
 And with good ale so wet;  
 Wherefore he may now set  
 In feldes and in medes,  
 And pray vpon his beades,  
 For yet he hath a payre  
 Of beades that be right fayre,  
 Of corall, gete, or ambre,  
 At home within his chambre;  
 For in matins or masse  
 Primar and portas,  
 And pottes and beades,  
 His lyfe he leades:  
 But this I wota,  
 That if ye nota  
 How this *idiot*  
 Doth folow the pots,  
 I holde you a *grota*  
 Ye wyll rede by rota  
 That he may were a cota  
 In Cocke Lorels<sup>1</sup> bota.  
 Thus the dirty doctour,  
 The popes oune proctour,  
 Wyll bragge and boost  
 Wyth ale and a toost,  
 And lyke a rutter  
 Hys Latin wyll vtter,  
 And turne and tosse hym,  
 Wyth *tu non possum*

---

<sup>1</sup> *Lorels*] Old ed. "losels."

*Loquere Latinum ;*  
 This *alum finum*  
 Is *bonus* then *vinum* ;  
*Ego volo quare*  
*Oum tu drinkare*  
*Pro tuum caput,*  
*Quia apud*  
*Te propiciacio,*  
*Tu non potes facio*  
*Tot quam ego ;*  
*Quam librum tu lego,*  
*Cause de me*  
*Apponere te :*  
*Juro per Deum*  
*Hoc est lifum meum,*  
*Quia drinkum statum*  
*Non facere malum.*  
 Thus our *dominus* dodkin  
 Wyth *ita vera* bodkin  
 Doth leade his lyfe,  
 Which to the ale wife  
 Is very profitable:  
 It is pytie he is not able  
 To mayntayne a table  
 For beggers and tinkers  
 And all lusty drinkers,  
 Or captayne or beddle  
 Wyth dronkardes to meddle.  
 Ye cannot, I am sure,  
 For keping of a cure  
 Fynde such a one well,  
 If ye shulde rake hell:  
 And therefore nowe  
 No more to you,  
*Sed perlegas ista,*  
*Si velis, papista ;*  
 Farewell and adewe,  
 With a whirlary whewe,

And a tirlary type;  
Beware of the whyppe."

---

From *A Commemoration or Dirige of Bastarde Edmonde Boner, alias Sauage, vsurped Bishoppe of London. Compiled by Le-meke Auale. Episcopatum eius accipiet alter. Anno Domini. 1569. Imprinted by P. O. 8vo. (a tract, chiefly in verse and of various metres: see Notes, vol. iii. 47.)*

" *The fiftle lesson.*

*Homo natus.*

" *Homo natus*

Came to heauen gatus.

Sir, you do come to latus,

With your shorne patus:

*Frequentia falsa Euangelii,*

For the loue of your bealie,

*Cum auro & argento,*

You loued the rules of Lento,

Whiche the Pope did inuento:

You are *spurius de muliere*,

Not legitimate nor lawful here:

*O quam*<sup>1</sup> *venenosa pestis,*

*Fur, periurus, latro, mechus,*

*Homicidus*<sup>2</sup> *tantum decus!*

*De salute animarum,*

Of Christes flocke thou hadest small carum:

Thou art *filius populi*:

Go, go to *Constantinopoli*,

To your maister the Turke;

There shall you lurke

---

<sup>1</sup> *O quam, &c.*] A line which ought to have rhymed with this one is wanting.

<sup>2</sup> *Homicidus*] Old ed. "*Homicidus*."

Emong the heathen soules.  
 Somtyme your shorne brethren of Poules  
 Were as blacke as moules,  
 With their cappes fower forked,  
 Their shoes warme corked;  
 Nosed like redde grapes,  
 Constant as she apes,  
 In nature like blacke monkes,  
 And shoote in sparowes trunkes,  
 And boule when thei haue dinde,  
 And kepe them from the winde;  
 And thei whiche are not able  
 Doe sitte still at the table,  
 With colour scarlet pale,  
 So small is their good ale:  
 Thus from God thei did tourne,  
 Long before their church did burne.  
 Then when riche men wer sicke,  
 Either dedde or quicke,  
*Valde diligenter notant*  
*Vbi diuites egrotant;*  
*Ibi currunt, nec cessabunt*  
*Donec ipsos tumilabunt;*  
*Oves alias tondunt,*  
*Et perochias confundunt.*  
 These felowes pilde as ganders,  
 Muche like the friers of Flanders,  
 Whiche serue Sathan about the cloisters,  
 Thei loue red wine and oisters.  
*Qui vult Satanæ seruire,*  
*Clastrum debet introire,*  
 And euer haue suche an hedde  
 As bastarde Boner that is dedde.  
 He would for the Pope take pain;  
 Therfore help, you friers of Spain,  
 You enquisiters, take paine:  
 It is a greate maine  
 Vnto the Pope, your hedde,  
 That Boner is thus dedde,

And buried in a misers graue,  
 Like a common k[naue].  
 Lo, lo, now is he dedde,  
 That was so well fedde,  
 And had a softe bedde!  
*Estote fortis in bello,*  
 Good Hardyng and thy fellowe;  
 If you be papistes right,  
 Come steale hym awaie by night,  
 And put hym in a shrine;  
 He was the Popes deuine;  
 Why, shall he be forgotten,  
 And lye still and rotten?  
 Come on, and doe not fainte;  
 Translate with spede your saint,  
 And put hym in a tombe:  
 His harte is now at Rome.  
 Come forth, you loughtes of Louen,  
 And steale awaie this slouen:  
 You are so full of ire,  
 And popishe desire,  
 And Romishe derision,  
 And hellishe deuision,  
 Therefore I am sure  
 Your kyngdome will not dure."

Sig. B iii

. . . . .

" *Responde.*

*Ne recorderis peccata,*  
 But open heauen gata,  
 Saint Peter, with your kaies;  
 Shewe my lorde the right waies:  
 He dwelt ones at Poules,  
 And had cure of our soules:  
 I wisse, he was not a baste,  
 But holie, meke, and chaste;  
 It is a greate pitie  
 That he is gone from our citie;

A man of greate honor;  
 O holy saint Boner!  
 You blessed friers  
 That neuer wer liers,  
 And you holy nunnes  
 That neuer had sonnes,  
 Set this child of grace  
 In some angelles place."

Sig. B vii.

---

From

*A Skeltonicall Salutation,  
 Or condigne gratulation,  
 And iust vexation  
 Of the Spanish Nation,  
 That in a bravado,  
 Spent many a Crusado,  
 In setting forth an Armado  
 England to invado.*

*Imprinted at London for Toby Cooke. 1589, 4to.*

"O king of Spaine,  
 Is it not a paine  
 To thy heart and braine  
 And euery vaine,  
 To see thy traine  
 For to sustaine,  
 Withouten gaine,  
 The worlds disdaine,  
 Which doth dispise  
 As toies and lies,  
 With shoutes and cries,  
 Thy enterprise,  
 As fitter for pies  
 And butter-flies,  
 Then men so wise?

O waspish king,  
 Wheres now thy sting,  
 Thy dart or sling,  
 Or strong bow-string,  
 That should vs wring,  
 And vnderbring,  
 Who euery way  
 Thee vexe and pay,  
 And beare the sway  
 By night and day,  
 To thy dismay,  
 In battle aray,  
 And every fray?  
 O pufte with pride,  
 What foolish guide  
 Made thee provide  
 To over-ride  
 This land so wide  
 From side to side,  
 And then, vntride,  
 Away to slide,  
 And not to abide,  
 But all in a ring  
 Away to fling?  
 O conquering,  
 O vanquishing,  
 With fast flying,  
 And no replying,  
 For feare of frying!

. . . . .  
 But who but Philippus,  
 That seeketh to nip vs,  
 To rob vs, and strip vs,  
 And then for to whip vs,  
 Would ever haue ment,  
 Or had intent,  
 Or hither sent  
 Such ships of charge,  
 So strong and so large,

Nay, the worst barge,  
Trusting to treason,  
And not to reason,  
Which at that season  
To him was geson,  
As doth appeare  
Both plaine and cleare  
To far and neere,  
To his confusion,  
By this conclusion,  
Which thus is framed,  
And must be named  
*Argumentum a minore,*  
*Cum horrore et timore?*  
If one Drake o,  
One poore snake o,  
Make vs shake o,  
Tremble and quake o,  
Were it not, trow yee,  
A madnes for me  
To vndertake  
A warre to make  
With such a lande,  
That is so mande,  
Wherein there be  
Of certaintie  
As hungrie as he  
Many a thousand more,  
That long full sore  
For Indian golde,  
Which makes men bolde? " &c.

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See also—*Jacke of the Northe*, &c. printed (most incorrectly) from C.C.C. MS. in Hartshorne's *Anc. Met. Tales*, p. 288.—*A recantation of famous Pasquin of Rome*. An. 1570. Imprinted at London by John Daye, 8vo, which (known to me only from *Brit. Bibliog.* ii. 289) contains Skeltonical passages.—*The Riddles of Heracitus and Democritus*. Printed at London by Ann Hatfield for John Norton, 1598, 4to, which (known to me only from *Restituta*, i. 175) has Skeltonical rhymes on the back of the title-page.—*The Wisdome of Doctor Dodypoll. As it hath bene sundrie times Acted by the Children of Powles*, 1600, 4to, which has some Skeltonical lines at sig. C 4.—*The Downfall of Robert Earle of Huntington*, &c. (by Anthony Munday,) 1601, 4to, and *The Death of Robert, Earle of Huntington*, &c. (by Anthony Munday and Henry Chettle), 1601, 4to, (two plays already noticed, p. cvi.), in which are various Skeltonical passages.—*Hobson's Horse-load of Letters, or a President for Epistles. The First Part*, 1617, 4to, which concludes with three epistles in verse, the last entitled "*A merry-mad Letter in Skeltons rime*," &c.—*Poems: By Michael Drayton Esquire*, &c., n.d., folio, which contains, at p. 801, a copy of verses entitled "A Skeltoniad."—*The Fortunate Isles*, &c. 1626, a masque by Ben Jonson (already noticed, p. cvii.), in which are imitations of Skelton's style.—*All The Workes of John Taylor The Water-poet*, &c. 1630, folio, which contains, at p. 245, "*A Skeltonicall salutation to those that know how to reade, and not marre the sense with hacking or mis-construction*" (printed as prose).—*Hesperides: or, The Works Both Humane & Divine of Robert Herrick Esq.*, 1648, 8vo, among which, at pp. 10, 97, 268, are verses in Skelton's favourite metre.—*The Works of Mr. John Cleveland, Containing his Poems, Orations, Epistles, Collected into One Volume*, 1687, 8vo, in which may be found, at p. 806, a piece of disgusting grossness (suggested by Skelton's *Elymour Rummynge*), entitled "*The Old Gill*."

A poem called *Philargyrie of greate Britayne*, 1551, printed (and no doubt written) by Robert Crowley, has been frequently

mentioned as a "Skeltonic" composition, but improperly, as the following lines will shew;

"Geue eare awhyle,  
And marke my style,  
You that hath wyt in store;  
For wyth wordes bare  
I wyll declare  
Thynge done long tyme before.  
Sometyme certayne  
Into Britayne,  
A lande full of plentie,  
A gyaunte greate  
Came to seke meate,  
Whose name was Philargyrie," &c.

"See also," says Warton (*Hist. of E. P.* ii. 358, note, ed. 4to), "a doggrel piece of this kind, *in imitation of Skelton*, introduced into Browne's *Shepherd's Pipe*,"—a mistake; for the poem of Hoccleve (inserted in *Eglogue* i.), to which Warton evidently alludes, is neither doggrel nor in Skelton's manner.

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**THE**  
**POETICAL WORKS**  
**OF**  
**JOHN SKELTON.**

**VOL. I.**

**1**



## POEMS OF SKELTON.

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### OF THE DEATH

OF THE NOBLE PRINCE, KYNGE EDWARDE THE FORTH,

PER SKELTONIDEM LAUREATUM.\*

*Miseremini mei*, ye that be my frendis !

This world hath formed me downe to fall :

How may I endure, when that eueri thyng endis ?

What creature is borne to be eternall ?

\* From the ed. by Kynge and Marche of *Certaine bokes compyled by Mayster Skelton*, n. d.—collated with the same work, ed. Day, n. d., and ed. Lant, n. d.; with Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1588; occasionally with the *Mirroure for Magistrates*, 1587 (in the earlier eds. of which the poem was incorporated,) and with a contemporary *ms.* in the possession of Miss Richardson Curren, which last has furnished a stanza hitherto unprinted.

Now there is no more but pray for me all :  
 Thus say I Edward, that late was youre kyngc,  
 And twenty two yeres ruled this imperyall,  
 Some vnto pleasure, and some to no lykyngc :  
 Mercy I aske of my mysdoynge ;  
 What auayleth it, frendes, to be my foo,       10  
 Sith I can not resyst, nor amend your com-  
 plaining ?

*Quia, ecce, nunc in pulvere dormio !*

I slepe now in molde, as it is naturall  
 That erth vnto erth hath his reuerture :  
 What ordeyned God to be terestryall,  
 Without recours to the erth of nature ?  
 Who to lyue euer may himselfe assure ?  
 What is it to trust on mutabilyte,  
 Sith that in this world nothing may indure ?  
 For now am I gone, that late was in prosperyte :   20  
 To presume thervvpon, it is but a vanyte,  
 Not certayne, but as a cheryfayre, full of wo :  
 Reygned not I of late in greate felycite ?  
*Et, ecce, nunc in pulvere dormio !*

Where was in my lyfe such one as I,  
 Whyle lady Fortune with me had continu-  
 aunce ?  
 Graunted not she me to haue victory,  
 In England to rayne, and to contribute  
 Fraunce ?  
 She toke me by the hand and led me a daunce,

And with her sugred lyppes on me she smyled ; 30

But, what for her dissembled countenaunce,  
I could not beware tyl I was begyled :

Now from this world she hath me excyled,

When I was lothyst hens for to go,  
And I am in age but, as who sayth, a chylde,  
*Et, ecce, nunc in pulvere dormio !*

I se wyll,\* they leve that doble my 3eris :

This dealid this world with me as it lyst,  
And hathe me made, to 3ow that be my perys,  
Example to thynke on Had I wyst : 40  
I storyd my cofers and allso my chest  
With taskys takynge of the comenalte ;  
I toke ther tresure, but of ther pray3eris mist ;  
Whom I beseche with pure humylyte  
For to forgeve and have on me pety ;  
I was 3our kynge, and kept 3ow from 3owr foo :  
I wold now amend, but that wull not be,  
[*Quia,*] *ecce, nunc in pulvere dormio !*

I had ynough, I held me not content,

Without remembraunce that I should dye ; 50  
And more euer to incroche redy was I bent,  
I knew not how longe I should it occupy :  
I made the Tower stronge, I wyst not why ;  
I knew not to whom I purchased Tetersall ;  
I amendid Douer on the mountayne hye,

\* *I se wyll, &c.*] This stanza only found in MS.



And London I prouoked to fortify the wall ;  
 I made Notingham a place full royall,  
 Wyndsore, Eltam, and many other mo :  
 Yet at the last I went from them all,  
*Et, ecce, nunc in pulvere dormio !* 60

Where is now my conquest and victory ?  
 Where is my riches and my royal aray ?  
 Wher be my coursers and my horses hye ?  
 Where is my myrth, my solas, and my play ?  
 As vanyte, to nought al is wandred away.  
 O lady Bes, longe for me may ye call !  
 For I am departed tyl domis day ;  
 But loue ye that Lorde that is soueraygne of all.  
 Where be my castels and buyldynges royall ?  
 But Windsore alone, now I haue no mo, 70  
 And of Eton the prayers perpetuall,  
*Et, ecce, nunc in pulvere dormio !*

Why should a man be proude or presume hye ?  
 Sainct Bernard therof nobly doth trete,  
 Seyth a man is but a sacke of stercorry,  
 And shall returne vnto wormis mete.  
 Why, what cam of Alexander the greate ?  
 Or els of stronge Sampson, who can tell ?  
 Were not wormes ordeyned theyr flesh to frete ?  
 And of Salomon, that was of wyt the well ? 80  
 Absolon profferyd his heare for to sell,  
 Yet for al his bewte wormys ete him also ;  
 And I but late in honour dyd excel,  
*Et, ecce, nunc in pulvere dormio !*

I haue played my pageyond, now am I past ;

Ye wot well all I was of no great yeld :

\*This al thing concluded shalbe at the last,

When death approchyth, then lost is the felde :

Then sythen this world me no longer vphelde,

Nor nought would conserue me here in my place, »

*In manus tuas, Domine*, my spirite vp I yelde,

Humbly beseching thé, God, of thy grace !

O ye curtes commyns, your hertis vnbrace

Benyngly now to pray for me also ;

For ryght wel you know your kyng I was,

*Et, ecce, nunc in pulvere dormio !*

## POETA SKELTON

LAUREATUS LIBELLUM SUUM METRICE ALLOQUITUR.\*

*Ad dominum properato meum, mea pagina, Percy,  
 Qui Northumbrorum jura paterna gerit ;  
 Ad nutum celebris tu prona repone leonis  
 Quæque suo patri tristia justa cano.  
 Ast ubi perlegit, dubiam sub mente volutet  
 Fortunam, cuncta quæ malefida rotat.  
 Qui leo sit felix, et Nestoris occupet annos ;  
 Ad libitum cujus ipse paratus ero.*

## SKELTON LAUREAT

## UPON THE

DOULOUR[U]S DETHE AND MUCHE LAMENTABLE CHAUNCE

OF THE MOST HONORABLE ERLE OF NORTHUMBERLANDE.

I WAYLE, I wepe, I sobbe, I sigh ful sore  
 The dedely fate, the dolefulle desteny  
 Of hym that is gone, alas, without restore,  
 Of the bloud royall descending nobelly ;

\* From Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568, collated with a copy of the poem in a *ms.* vol. now in the British Museum (*MS. Reg.* 18. D ii fol. 165,) which formerly belonged to the fifth Earl of Northumberland, son of the nobleman whose fate is here lamented: vide *Account of Skelton*, &c. This elegy was printed by Percy in his *Reliques of An. Engl. Poet.* (i. 95, ed. 1794,) from the *ms.* just mentioned.

Whose lordshyp doutles was slayne lamentably  
 Thorow treson, again him compassed and wrought,  
 Trew to his prince in word, in dede, and thought.

Of heuenly poems, O Clyo, calde by name  
 In the colege of Musis goddes hystoriall,  
 Adres thé to me, whiche am both halt and lame 10  
 In elect vterance to make memoryall !  
 To thé for souccour, to thé for helpe I call,  
 Mine homely rudnes and dryghnes to expell  
 With the freshe waters of Elyconys well.

Of noble actes aunciently enrolde  
 Of famous pryncis and lordes of astate,  
 By thy report ar wont to be extold,  
 Regestringe trewly euery formare date ;  
 Of thy bountie after the vsuall rate  
 Kyndell in me suche plenty of thy noblès, 20  
 These sorowfulle dites that I may shew expres.

In sesons past, who hath herde or sene  
 Of formar writyng by any presidente  
 That vilane hastarddis in their furious tene,  
 Fulfylled with malice of froward entente,  
 Confetered togeder of commonn concente  
 Falsly to slee theyr moste singuler good lord ?  
 It may be regestrede of shamefull recorde.

So noble a man, so valiaunt lord and knyght,  
 Fulfilled with honor, as all the world doth ken ; 30

At his commaundement which had both day and  
nyght

Knyghtes and squyers, at euery season when  
He calde vpon them, as meniall houshold men;  
Were not these commons vncurteis karlis of kind  
To slo their owne lord? God was not in their  
mynd.

And were not they to blame, I say, also,  
That were aboute him, his owne seruants of  
trust,

To suffre him slayn of his mortall fo?  
Fled away from hym, let hym ly in the dust;  
They bode not till the reckenyng were discust; <sup>as</sup>  
What shuld I flatter? what shuld I glose or  
paint?

Fy, fy for shame, their hartes were to faint.

In England and Fraunce which gretly was re-  
douted,

Of whom both Flaunders and Scotland stode  
in drede,

To whom great estates obeyed and lowted,  
A mayny of rude villayns made hym for to  
blede;

Unkyndly they slew him, that help them oft at  
nede:

He was their bulwark, their paues, and their wall,  
Yet shamfully they slew hym; that shame mot  
them befall!

I say, ye comoners, why wer ye so stark mad? <sup>so</sup>

What frantyk frensy fyll in your brayne?

Where was your wit and reson ye should haue  
had?

What wilful foly made yow to ryse agayne

Your naturall lord? alas, I can not fayne:

Ye armyd you with will, and left your wit behynd;

Well may ye<sup>1</sup> be called comones most vnkynd.

He was your chefteyne, your shelde, your chef  
defence,

Redy to assyst you in euery time of nede;

Your worshyp depended of his excellence:

Alas, ye mad men, to far ye did excede; <sup>so</sup>

Your hap was vnhappy, to ill was your spede:

What moued you againe him to war or to fyght?

What alyde you to sle your lord again all ryght?

The ground of his quarel was for his souerain  
lord,

The well concerning of all the hole lande,

Demandyng suche duties as nedes most acord

To the ryght of his prince, which shold not be  
withstand;

For whose cause ye slew him with your owne  
hand:

But had his noble men done wel that day,

Ye had not bene able to haue sayd hym nay. <sup>so</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ye] So ms. Dyce, "you." C.

But ther was fals packing, or els I am begylde ;  
How be it the mater was euydent and playne,  
For if they had occupied their spere and their  
shilde,  
This noble man doutles had not bene slayne.  
But men say they wer lynked with a double  
chaine,  
And held with the comones vnder a cloke,  
Which kindeled the wild fyr that made al this  
smoke.

The commons renyed ther taxes to pay,  
Of them demaunded and asked by the kyng ;  
With one voice importune they plainly sayd nay ;  
They buskt them on a bushment themselfe in  
baile to bring,  
Againe the kyngs plesure to wrestle or to  
wring ;  
Bluntly as bestis with boste and with crye  
They sayd they forsed not, nor carede not to dy.

The nobelnes of the north, this valiant lord and knight,  
As man that was innocent of trechery or traine,  
Presed forth boldly to withstand the myght,  
And, lyke marciall Hector, he faught them  
agayne, [maine,  
Vygorously vpon them with might and with  
Trustyngin noblemen that were with him there; so  
But al they fled from hym for falshode or fere.

Barones, knyghtes, squiers, one and all,  
 Together with seruauntes of his famuly,  
 Turned their backis, and let their master fal,  
 Of whos [life] they counted not a flye ;  
 Take vp whose wold, for ther they let him ly.  
 Alas, his gold, his fee, his annual rent  
 Upon suche a sort was ille bestowd and spent !

He was enuironed aboute on euery syde      \*  
 With his enemyes, that wer starke mad and  
     wode ;  
 Yet while he stode he gaue them woundes  
     wyde :  
 Allas for ruth ! what thoughe his mynd wer  
     gode,  
 His corage manly, yet ther he shed his blode :  
 Al left alone, alas, he foughte in vayne !  
 For cruelly among them ther he was slayne.

Alas for pite ! that Percy thus was spylt,  
 The famous Erle of Northumberland ;  
 Of knyghtly prowes the sword, pomel, and hylt,  
 The myghty lyon doutted by se and lande ;  
 O dolorus chaunce of Fortunes froward hande ! 110  
 What man, remembryng howe shamfully he was  
     slaine,  
 From bitter weping himself can restrain ?

O cruell Mars, thou dedly god of war !  
 O dolorous tewisday, dedicate to thy name,



When thou shoke thy sworde so noble a man  
to mar!

O ground vngracious, vnhappy be thy fame,  
Which wert endyed with rede bloud of the  
same

Most noble erle ! O foule mysuryd ground,  
Whereon he gat his finall dedely wounde !

O Atropos, of the fatall systers iii 129

Goddes most cruel vnto the lyfe of man,  
All merciles, in thé is no pite!

O homicide, which sleest all that thou can,  
So forcibly vpon this erle thou ran,  
That with thy sword, enharpit of mortall drede,  
Thou kit asonder his perfight vitall threde !

My wordes vnpullysht be, nakide and playne,  
Of aureat poems they want ellumynyng ;  
But by them to knowlege ye may attayne  
Of this lordes dethe and of his murdryng ; 130  
Which whils he lyued had fuyson of euery  
thing,  
Of knights, of squyers, chyf lord of toure and  
towne,  
Tyl fykkell Fortune began on hym to frowne :

Paregall to dukes, with kynges he might compare,  
Surmountinge in honor al erlis he did excede ;  
To all countreis aboute hym reporte me I dare ;  
Lyke to Eneas benigne in worde and dede,

Valiant as Hector in euery marciall nede,  
 Prouident, discrete, circumspect, and wyse,  
 Tyll the chaunce ran agayne hym of Fortunes 140  
 duble dyse.

What nedeth me for to extoll his fame  
 With my rude pen enkankered all with rust,  
 Whose noble actes show worshiply his name,  
 Transendyng far myne homly Muse, that  
 muste  
 Yet somewhat wright supprised with herty  
 lust,  
 Truly reportyng his right noble estate,  
 Immortally whiche is immaculate?

His noble blode neuer destayned was,  
 Trew to his prince for to defend his ryght,  
 Doblenes hatyng fals maters to compas, 150  
 Treytory and treason he banyshyt out of syght,  
 With truth to medle was al his holl delyght,  
 As all his countrey can testyfy the same :  
 To sle suche a lorde, alas, it was great shame !

If the hole quere of the Musis nyne  
 In me all onely wer set and comprysed,  
 Enbrethed with the blast of influence deuyne,  
 As perfytylly as could be thought or deuised ;  
 To me also allthough it were promised  
 Of laureat Phebus holy the eloquence, 160  
 All were to lytell for his magnificence.

O yonge lyon, but tender yet of age,  
Grow and encrease, remembre thyn estate ;  
God thé assyst unto thyn herytage,  
And geue thé grace to be more fortunate !  
Agayn rebellyones arme thé to make debate ;  
And, as the lyone, whiche is of bestes kyng,  
Unto thy subiectes be curteis and benygne.

I pray God sende thé prosperous lyfe and long,  
Stable thy mynde constant to be and fast, 170  
Ryght to mayntayn, and to resyst all wronge :  
All flatteryng faytors abhor and from thé  
cast ;  
Of foule detraction God kepe thé from the  
blast !  
Let double delyng in thé haue no place,  
And be not lyght of credence in no case.

With heuy chere, with dolorous hart and mynd,  
Eche man may sorow in his inward thought  
This lordes death, whose pere is hard to fynd,  
Algife Englund and Fraunce were thorow  
saught.  
Al kynges, all princes, al dukes, well they 180  
ought,  
Both temporall and spiritual, for to complayne  
This noble man, that crewelly was slayne :

More specially barons, and those knyghtes bold,  
And al other gentilmen with him enterteined

In fee, as menyall men of his housold,  
 Whom he as lord worshyply mainteyned;  
 To sorowful weping they ought to be con-  
 streined,  
 As oft as they call to theyr remembraunce  
 Of ther good lord the fate and dedely chaunce.

O perlese Prince of heuen emperyall ! 100  
 That with one word formed al thing of noughte;  
 Heuen, hell, and erthe obey unto thy call;  
 Which to thy resemblaunce wondersly hast  
 wrought  
 All mankynd, whom thou full dere hast  
 bought,  
 With thy bloud precious our finaunce thou did pay,  
 And vs redemed from the fendys pray;

To thé pray we, as Prince incomparable,  
 As thou art of mercy and pyte the well,  
 Thou bring unto thy joye eterminable  
 The soull of this lorde from all daunger of hell, 200  
 In endles blys with thé to byde and dwell  
 In thy palace aboue the orient,  
 Where thou art Lord and God omnipotent.

O quene of mercy, O lady full of grace,  
 Mayden most pure, and Goddes moder dere,  
 To sorowful hartes chef comfort and solace,  
 Of all women O flowre withouten pere!  
 Pray to thy Son aboue the sterris clere,

He to vouchesaf, by thy mediacion,  
To pardon thy seruauant, and brynge to saluacion. 210

In joy triumphaunt the heuenly yerarchy,  
With all the hole sorte of that glorious place,  
His soull mot receyue into theyr company,  
Thorow bounty of Hym that formed all solace;  
Wel of pite, of mercy, and of grace,  
The Father, the Sonn, and the Holy Ghost,  
In Trinitate one God of myghtes moste !

*Non sapit, humanis qui certam ponere rebus  
Spem cupit : est hominum raraque ficta fides.*

TETRASTICHON SKELTON. LAUREATI AD MAGISTRUM RUK-  
SHAW, SACRÆ THEOLOGIÆ EGREGIUM PROFESSOREM.

*Accipe nunc demum, doctor celeberrime Rukshaw,  
Carmina, de calamo quæ cecidere meo ;  
Et quanquam placidis non sunt modulata camenis,  
Sunt tamen ex nostro pectore prompta pio.*

*Vale feliciter, virorum laudatissime.*

SKELTON LAUREATE

AGAYNSTE

*A comely coystrowne, that curyowsly chauntyd,  
and curryshly cowntred, and madly in hys  
musykkys mokyshly made agaynste the ix Musys  
of polytyke poems and poettys matryculat.\**

Of all nacyons vnder the heuyn,  
These frantyke foolys I hate most of all;  
For though they stumble in the synnys seuyn,  
In peuyshnes yet they snapper and fall,  
Which men the viii dedly syn call.  
This peuysh proud, thys prendergest,  
When he is well, yet can he not rest.

A swete suger lofe and sowre bayardys bun  
Be sumdele lyke in forme and shap,  
The one for a duke, the other for dun,                   n  
A maunchet for morell theron to snap.  
Hys hart is to hy to haue any hap;  
But for in his gamut carp that he can,  
Lo, Jak wold be a jentylman!

\* This poem, and the three pieces which follow it, are given from a tract of four leaves, n. d., and without printer's name (but evidently from the press of Pynson,) collated with Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568.

20 AGAYNSTE A COMELY COYSTROWNE.

Wyth, Hey, trolly, loly, lo, whip here, Jak,  
 Alumbek sodyldym syllorym ben !  
 Curyowsly he can both counter and knak  
 Of Martyn Swart and all hys mery men.  
 Lord, how Perkyn is proud of hys pohen !  
 But ask wher he fyndyth among hys monacordys 20  
 An holy water clarke a ruler of lordys.

He can not fynd it in rule nor in space :  
 He solfyth to haute, hys trybyll is to hy ;  
 He braggyth of his byrth, that borne was full bace ;  
 Hys musyk withoute mesure, to sharp is hys  
 my ;  
 He trymmyth in hys tenor to counter pyrdewy ;  
 His dyscant is besy, it is withoute a mene ;  
 To fat is hys fantasy, hys wyt is to lene.

He lumbryth on a lewde lewte, Roty bully joyse,  
 Rumbyll downe, tumbyll downe, hey go, now,  
 now !  
 He fumblyth in hys fyngeryng an vgly good  
 noyse,  
 It semyth the sobbyng of an old sow : 22  
 He wold be made moch of, and he wyst how ;  
 Wele sped in spyndels and turnyng of tauellys ;  
 A bungler, a brawler, a pyker of quarellys.

Comely he clappyth a payre of clauycordys ;  
 He whystelyth so swetely, he makyth me to  
 swete ;

His descant is dashed full of dyscordes ;  
 A red angry man, but easy to intrete :  
 An vssher of the hall fayn wold I get, 40  
 To poynte this proude page a place and a rome,  
 For Jak wold be a jentyلمان, that late was a grome.

Jak wold jet, and yet Jyll sayd nay ; [the best :  
 He counteth in his countenance to checke with  
 A inalaperte medler that pryeth for his pray,  
 In a dysh dare he rush at the rypest ;  
 Dremyng in dumpys to wrangyll and to wrest :  
 He fyndeth a proporceyon in his prycke songe,  
 To drynk at a draught a larg and a long.

Nay, iape not with hym, he is no small fole, 50  
 It is a solemnpne syre and a solayne ;  
 For lordes and ladyes lerne at his scole ;  
 He techyth them so wysely to solf and to fayne,  
 That neyther they synge wel prycke songe nor  
 playne :  
 Thys docter Deuyas commensyd in a cart,  
 A master, a mynstrell, a fydlar, a farte.

What though ye can cownter *Custodi nos ?*  
 As well it becomyth yow, a parysh towne clarke,  
 To syng *Sospitati dedit agros* :  
 Yet bere ye not to bold, to braule ne to bark 60  
 At me, that medeled nothyng with youre wark :  
 Correct fyrst thy self ; walk, and be nought !  
 Deme what thou lyst, thou knowyst not my thought.



22 CONTRA CANTITANTEM ASINUM SARCASMOS.

A prouerbe of old, say well or be styll :  
Ye are to vnhappy occasyons to fynde  
Vppon me to clater, or els to say yll.  
Now haue I shewyd you part of your proud  
mynde ;  
Take thys in worth, the best is behynde.  
Wryten at Croydon by Crowland in the Clay,  
On Candelmas euyng, the Kalendas of May. 70

---

CONTRA ALIUM CANTITANTEM ET ORGANISANTEM ASINUM,  
QUI IMPUGNABAT SKELTONIDA PIERIUM, SARCASMOS.

*Præponenda meis non sunt tua plectra camenis,  
Nec quantum nostra fistula clara tua est :  
Sæpe licet lyricos modularis arundine psalmos,  
Et tremulos calamis concinis ipse modos ;  
Quamvis mille tuus digitus dat carmine plausus,  
Nam tua quam tua vox est mage docta manus ;  
Quamvis cuncta facis tumida sub mente superbus,  
Gratior est Phæbo fistula nostra tamen.  
Ergo tuum studeas animo deponere fastum,  
Et violare sacrum desine, stulte, virum.  
Qd Skelton, laureat.*

---

## SKELTON LAUREAT,

*Vppon a deedmans hed, that was sent to hym from  
an honorable jentyllwoman for a token, deuysyd  
this gostly medytacyon in Englysh couenable, in  
sentence comendable, lamentable, lacrymable, pro-  
fyttable for the soule.*

YOURE vgly tokyn  
My mynd hath brokyn  
From worldly lust ;  
For I haue dyscust  
We ar but dust,  
And dy we must.

It is generall  
To be mortall :  
I haue well espyde  
No man may hym hyde  
From Deth holow eyed,  
With synnews wyderyd,  
With bonys shyderyd,  
With hys worme etyn maw,  
And his gastly jaw  
Gaspyng asyde,  
Nakyd of hyde,  
Neyther flesh nor fell.

10

Then, by my counsell,  
Loke that ye spell  
Well thys gospell :

20

22 CONTRA CANTITANTEM ASINUM SARCASMOS.

A prouerbe of old, say well or be styll :

Ye are to vnhappy occasyons to fynde

Vppon me to clater, or els to say yll.

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Wryten at Croydon by Crowland in the Clay,

On Candemas euyne, the Kalendas of May. 70

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QUI IMPUGNABAT SKELTONIDA PIERIUM, SARCASMOS.

*Præponenda meis non sunt tua plectra camenis,*

*Nec quantum nostra fistula clara tua est :*

*Sæpe licet lyricos modularis arundine psalmos,*

*Et tremulos calamis concinis ipse modos ;*

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Gaspyng asyde,  
Nakyd of hyde,  
Neyther flesh nor fell.

Then, by my counsell,  
Loke that ye spell  
Well thys gspell :

10

20

For wher so we dwell  
 Deth wyll us qwell,  
 And with us mell.

For all oure pamberde paunchys,  
 Ther may no fraunchys,  
 Nor worldly blys,  
 Redeme vs from this :  
 Oure days be datyd,  
 To be chekmatyd 20  
 With drawttys of deth,  
 Stoppyng oure breth ;  
 Oure eyen synkyng,  
 Oure bodys stynkyng,  
 Oure gummys grynnyng,  
 Oure soulys brynnyng.  
 To whom, then, shall we sew,  
 For to haue rescew,  
 But to swete Jesu,  
 On vs then for to rew ? 40

O goodly chylde  
 Of Mary mylde,  
 Then be oure shyld !  
 That we be not exyld  
 To the dyne dale  
 Of boteles bale,  
 Nor to the lake  
 Of fendys blake.

But graunt vs grace  
 To se thy face, 50  
 And to purchace

Thyne heuenly place,  
 And thy palace,  
 Full of solace,  
 Aboue the sky,  
 That is so hy ;  
 Eternally  
 To beholde and se  
 The Trynyte !  
 Amen.

60

*Myrres vous y.*

---

WOMANHOD, wanton, ye want ;  
 Youre medelyng, mastres, is manerles ;  
 Plente of yll, of goodnes skant,  
 Ye rayll at ryot, recheles :  
 To prayse youre porte it is nedeles ;  
 For all your draffe yet and youre dreggys,  
 As well borne as ye full oft tyme beggys.

Why so koy and full of skorne ?  
 Myne horse is sold, I wene, you say ;  
 My new furryd gowne, when it is worne,  
 Put vp youre purs, ye shall non pay.  
 By crede, I trust to se the day,  
 As proud a pohen as ye sprede,  
 Of me and other ye may haue nede.

10

Though angelyk be youre smylyng,  
 Yet is youre tong an adders tayle,  
 Full lyke a scorpyon styngyng  
 All those by whom ye haue auayle :  
 Good mastres Anne, there ye do shayle :  
 What prate ye, praty pyggysny ?      29  
 I truste to quyte you or I dy.

Your key is mete for euery lok,  
 Your key is comen and hangyth owte ;  
 Your key is redy, we nede not knock,  
 Nor stand long wrestyng there aboute ;  
 Of youre doregate ye haue no doute :  
 But one thyng is, that ye be lewde :  
 Holde youre tong now, all beshrewde !

To mastres Anne, that farly swete,  
 That wonnes at the Key in Temmys strete.      30

*Here folowythe dyuers Balettys and Dyties solacyous, deuysyd by Master Skelton, Laureat.\**

WITH, Lullay, lullay, lyke a chylde,  
Thou slepyst to long, thou art begylde.

My darlyng dere, my daysy floure,  
Let me, quod he, ly in your lap.  
Ly styll, quod she, my paramoure,  
Ly styll hardely, and take a nap.  
Hys hed was heuy, such was his hap,  
All drowsy dremyng, dround in slepe,  
That of hys loue he toke no kepe,  
With, Hey, lullay, &c.

With ba, ba, ba, and bas, bas, bas,  
She cheryshed hym both cheke and chyn,  
That he wyst neuer where he was ; 10  
He had forgotten all dedely syn.  
He wantyd wyt her loue to wyn :  
He trusted her payment, and lost all hys pray :<sup>1</sup>  
She left hym slepyng, and stale away,  
Wyth, Hey, lullay, &c.

\* A tract so entitled, of four leaves, n. d. and without printer's name, but evidently from the press of Pynson, consists of the five following pieces.

<sup>1</sup> pray | Qy. "pay"? C.



The ryuers rowth, the waters wan,  
 She sparyd not, to wete her fete ;  
 She wadyd ouer, she found a man  
 That halsyd her hartely and kyst her swete :  
 Thus after her cold she cougth a hete.  
 My lefe, she sayd, rowtyth in hys bed ;      20  
 I wys he hath an heuy hed,  
 Wyth, Hey, lullay, &c.

What dremyst thou, drunchard, drousy pate !  
 Thy lust and lykyng is from thé gone ;  
 Thou blynerd blowboll, thou wakyst to late,  
 Behold, thou lyste, luggard, alone !  
 Well may thou sygh, well may thou grone,  
 To dele wyth her so cowardly :  
 I wys, powle hachet, she bleryd thyne I.  
 Qd Skelton, laureate.

---

THE auncient acquaintance, madam, betwen vs  
 twayn,  
 The famylyaryte, the formar dalyaunce,  
 Causyth me that I can not myself refrayne  
 Butthat Imust wryte for my plesaunt pastaunce :  
 Remembryng your passyng goodly counte-  
 naunce,  
 Your goodly port, your bewteous visage,  
 Ye may be countyd comfort of all corage.

Of all your feturs fauorable to make tru discription,

I am insufficyent to make such enterpryse ;  
 For thus dare I say, without [con]tradiceyon, 10  
 That dame Menolope was neuer half so wyse :

Yet so it is that a rumer begynnyth for to ryse,  
 How in good horsmen ye set your hole delyght,  
 And haue forgotten your old trew louyng knyght.

Wyth bound and rebound, bounsyingly take vp  
 Hys jentyll curtoyl, and set nowght by small  
 naggys !

Spur vp at the hynder gyrrh, with, Gup, morell,  
 gup !

With, Jayst ye, jenet of Spayne, for your tayll  
 waggys !

Ye cast all your corage vppon such courtly  
 haggys.

Haue in sergeaunt ferroure, myne horse behynd 20  
 is bare ;

He rydeth well the horse, but he rydeth better  
 the mare.

Ware, ware, the mare wynsyth wyth her wanton  
 hele !

She kykyth with her kalkyns and keylyth with  
 a clench ;

She goyth wyde behynde, and hewyth neuer a dele :  
 Ware gallyng in the widders, ware of that  
 wrenche !

It is perlous for a horseman to dyg in the  
trenche.  
Thys greuyth your husband, that ryght jentyll  
knyght,  
And so with youre seruantys he fersly doth fyght.

So fersly he fytyth, his mynde is so fell,  
That he dryuyth them doune with dyntes on  
ther day wach ;  
He bresyth theyr braynpannyes and makyth them  
to swell,  
Theyre browys all to-brokyn, such clappys they  
cach ;  
Whose jalawsy malcyous makyth them to lepe  
the hach ;  
By theyr conusaunce knowing how they serue a  
wily py :  
Ask all your neybourys whether that I ly.

It can be no counsell that is cryed at the cros :  
For youre jentyll husband sorowfull am I ;  
How be it, he is not furst hath had a los :  
Aduertysyng you, madame, to warke more  
secretly,  
Let not all the world make an owtery ;  
Play fayre play, madame, and loke ye play clene,  
Or ells with gret shame your game wylbe sene.  
Qd Skelton, laureat.

---

KNOLEGE, aquayntance, resort, fauour with grace ;  
 Delyte, desyre, respyte wyth lyberte ;  
 Corage wyth lust, conuenient tyme and space ;  
 Dysdayns, dystres, exylyd cruelte ;  
 Wordys well set with good habylte ;  
 Demure demenaunce, womanly of porte ;  
 Transendyng plesure, surmountyng all dysporte ;

Allectuary arrectyd to redres

These feuerous axys, the dedely wo and payne  
 Of thoughtfull hertys plungyd in dystres ;      10  
 Refresshyng myndys the Aprell shoure of  
     rayne ;

Conduite of comforte, and well most souerayne ;  
 Herber enverduryd, contynuall fressh and grene ;  
 Of lusty somer the passyng goodly quene ;

The topas rych and precyouse in vertew ;

Your ruddys wyth ruddy rubys may compare ;  
 Saphyre of sadnes, enuayned wyth indy blew ;  
 The pullyshed perle youre whytenes doth  
     declare ;

Dyamand poyntyd to rase oute hartly care ;  
 Geyne surfetous suspecte the emeraud com-      20  
     endable ;

Relucent smaragd, obiecte imcomperable ;

Encleryd myrroure and perspectyue most bryght,  
 Illumynynd wyth feturys far passyng my reporte ;

Radyent Esperus, star of the clowdy nyght,  
 Lode star to lyght these louers to theyr porte,  
 Gayne dangerous stormys theyr anker of sup-  
 porte,  
 Theyr sayll of solace most comfortably clad,  
 Whych to behold makyth heuy hartys glad :

Remorse haue I of youre most goodlyhod,  
 Of youre behauoure curtes and benyge, 30  
 Of your bownte and of youre womanhod,  
 Which makyth my hart oft to lepe and  
 sprynge,  
 And to remember many a praty thyng;  
 But absens, alas, wyth tremelyng fere and drede  
 Apashyth me, albeit I haue no nede.

You I assure, absens is my fo,  
 My dedely wo, my paynfull heuynes;  
 And if ye lyst to know the cause why so,  
 Open myne hart, beholde my mynde expres :  
 I wold ye coud ! then shuld ye se, mastres, 40  
 How there nys thyng that I couet so fayne  
 As to embrace you in myne armys twayne.

Nothyng yerthly to me more desyrous  
 Than to beholde youre bewteouse countenance :  
 But, hatefull absens, to me so enuyous,  
 Though thou withdraw me from her by long  
 dystaunce,  
 Yet shall she neuer oute of remembraunce ;

For I haue grauyd her wythin the secret wall  
 Of my trew hart, to loue her best of all!  
 Qd Skelton, laureat.

---

*Cuncta licet cecidisse putas discrimina rerum,  
 Et prius incerta nunc tibi certa manent,  
 Consiliis usure meis tamen aspice caute,  
 Subdola non fallat te dea fraude sua :  
 Sæpe solet placido mortales fallere vultu,  
 Et cuto sub placida tabida sæpe dolent ;  
 Ut quando secura putas et cuncta serena,  
 Anguis sub viridi gramine sæpe latet.*

Though ye suppose all jeperdys ar paste,  
 And all is done that ye lokyd for before,      10  
 Ware yet, I rede you, of Fortunes dowble cast,  
 For one fals poynt she is wont to kepe in store,  
 And vnder the fell oft festered is the sore :  
 That when ye thynke all daunger for to pas,  
 Ware of the lesard lyeth lurkyng in the gras.  
 Qd Skelton, laureat.

---

Go, pytyous hart, rasyd with dedly wo,  
 Persyd with payn, bleding with wondes smart,  
 Bewayle thy fortune, with vaynys wan and blo.  
 O Fortune vnfrendly, Fortune vnkynde thow  
     art,  
 VOL. I.                      3

To be so cruell and so ouerthwart,  
To suffer me so carefull to endure,  
That wher I loue best I dare not dyscure!

One ther is, and euer one shalbe,  
For whose sake my hart is sore dyseasyd;  
For whose loue, welcom dysease to me!           10  
I am content so all partys be pleasyd:  
Yet, and God wold, I wold my payne were  
easyd!

But Fortune enforsyth me so carefully to endure,  
That where I loue best I dare not dyscure.

Skelton, laureat,

At the instance of a nobyll lady.

## MANERLY MARGERY MYLK AND ALE.\*

AY, beshere we yow, be my fay,  
 This wanton clarkes be nyse all way;  
 Avent, avent, my popagay!  
 What, will ye do no thyng but play?  
 Tully valy, strawe, let be, I say!  
 Gup, Cristian Clowte, gup, Jak of the vale!  
 With, Manerly Margery Mylk and Ale.

Be God, ye be a praty pode,  
 And I loue you an hole cart lode.  
 Strawe, Jamys foder, ye play the fode,      10  
 I am no hakney for your rode;  
 Go watch a bole, your bak is brode;  
 Gup, Cristian Clowte, gup, Jak of the vale!  
 With, Manerly Margery Mylk and Ale.

\* From the Fairfax ms., which formerly belonged to Ralph Thoresby, and now forms part of the Additional mss. (5465. fol. 109) in the British Museum. It was printed (together with the music,) by Hawkins, *Hist. of Music*, iii. 2. This song was inserted also in the first edition of *Ancient Songs*, 1790, p. 100, by Ritson, who observes,—“Since Sir J. Hawkins’s transcript was made, the ms. appears to have received certain alterations, occasioned, as it should seem, but certainly not authorised, by the over-scrupulous delicacy of its late or present possessor.” p. 102.



I wiss ye dele vncurtlesly ;  
What wolde ye frompill me ? now, fy !  
What, and ye shalbe my piggesnye ?  
Be Crist, ye shall not, no hardely ;  
I will not be japed bodely : 20  
Gup, Cristian Clowte, gup, Jake of the vale !  
With, Manerly Margery Mylk and Ale.

Walke forth your way, ye cost me nought ;  
Now haue I fowned that I haue sought,  
The best chepe flessch that euyr I bought.  
Yet, for His loue that all hath wrought,  
Wed me, or els I dye for thought !  
Gup, Cristian Clowte, your breth is stale !  
Go, Manerly Margery Mylk and Ale !  
Gup, Cristian Clowte, gup, Jak of the vale ! 20  
With, Manerly Margery Mylk and Ale.

HERE BEGYNNETH A LYTELL TREATYSE,

NAMED

THE BOWGE OF COURTE.\*

THE PROLOGUE TO THE BOWGE OF COURTE.

In autumpne, whan the sonne *in Virgine*  
 By radyante hete enryped hath our corne ;  
 Whan Luna, full of mutabylyte,  
 As emperes the dyademe hath worne  
 Of our poie artyke, smyllynge halfe in scorne  
 At our folý and our vnstedfastnesse ;  
 The tyme whan Mars to werre hym dyde dres ;

I, callynge to mynde the greate auctoryte  
 Of poetes olde, whyche full craftely,  
 Vnder as couerte termes as coude be, 10  
 Can touche a trouth and cloke it subtylly  
 Wyth fresshe vtteraunce full sentencyously ;  
 Dyuerse in style, some spared not vyce to wryte,<sup>1</sup>  
 Some of moralyte nobly dyde endyte ;

\* From the ed. of Wynkyn de Worde, n. d., in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, collated with another ed. by Wynkyn de Worde, n. d., in the Public Library, Cambridge, and with Marzhe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568.

<sup>1</sup> *wryte*] Qy. "wryte" (i. e. blame)?

Wherby I rede theyr renome and theyr fame  
 Maye neuer dye, bute euermore endure :  
 I was sore moued to aforce the same,  
 But Ignoraunce full soone dyde me dyscure,  
 And shewed that in this arte I was not sure ;  
 For to illumyne, she sayde, I was to dulle,      20  
 Aussyngge me my penne alwaye to pulle,

And not wryte ; for he so wyll atteyne  
 Excedynge ferther than his connyng is,  
 His hede maye be harde, but feble is his brayne,  
 Yet haue I knowen suche er this ;  
 But of reproche surely he maye not mys,  
 That clymmeth hyer than he may fotyngge haue ;  
 What and he slyde downe, who shall hym saue ?

Thus vp and down my mynde was drawen and  
 cast,  
 That I ne wyste what to do was beste ;      20  
 So sore enwered, that I was at the laste  
 Enforced to slepe and for to take some reste ;  
 And to lye downe as soone as I me dreste,  
 At Harwyche Porte slumbryngge as I laye,  
 In myne hostes house, called Powers Keye,

Methoughte I sawe a shyppe, goodly of sayle,  
 Come saylyngge forth into that hauen brood,  
 Her takelyngge ryche and of hye apparayle :  
 She kyste an anker, and there she laye at rode.  
 Marchauntes her borded to see what she had      20  
 lode :

Therein they founde royall marchaundyse,  
Frighted with plesure of what ye coude deuyse.

But than I thoughte I woulde not dwell behynde  
Amonge all other I put myselfe in prece.  
Than there coude I none aquentaunce fynde :  
There was moche noyse ; anone one cryed, Cese !  
Sharpely commaundyng eche man holde hys  
pece :

Maysters, he sayde, the shyp that ye here see,  
The Bowge of Courte it hyghte for certeynte :

The owner therof is lady of estate, 80  
Whoos name to tell is dame Saunce-pere ;  
Her marchaundyse is ryche and fortunate,  
But who wyll haue it muste paye therfore dere ;  
This royall chaffre that is shypped here  
Is called Fauore, to stonde in her good grace.  
Than sholde ye see there pressyng in a pace

Of one and other that wolde this lady see ;  
Whiche sat behynde a traues of sylke fyne,  
Of golde of tessew the fynest that myghte be,  
In a trone whiche fer clerer dyde shyne 80  
Than Phebus in his spere celestyne ;  
Whoos beaute, honoure, goodly porte,  
I haue to lytyll connyng to reporte.

But, of eche thyng there as I toke hede,  
Amonge all other was wrytten in her trone,

In golde letters, this worde, whiche I dyde rede,  
*Garder<sup>1</sup> le fortune, que est mauelz et bone !*  
 And, as I stode redynge this verse myselfe allone,  
 Her chyef gentylwoman, Daunger by her name,  
 Gaue me a taunte, and sayde I was to blame 70

To be so perte to prese so proudly vppe :  
 She sayde she trowed that I had eten sause ;  
 She asked yf euer I dranke of saucys cuppe.  
 And I than soffily answered to that clause,  
 That, so to saye, I had gyuen her no cause.  
 Than asked she me, Syr, so God thé spede,  
 What is thy name ? and I sayde, it was Dredde.

What mouyd thé, quod she, hydder to come ?  
 Forsoth, quod I, to bye some of youre ware.  
 And with that worde on me she gaue a glome 80  
 With browes bente, and gan on me to stare  
 Full daynnously, and fro me she dyde fare,  
 Leuyng me stondynge as a mased man :  
 To whome there came an other gentylwoman ;

Desyre her name was, and so she me tolde,  
 Sayenge to me, Broder, be of good chere,  
 Abasshe you not, but hardely be bolde,  
 Auauce yourselfe to aproche and come nere :  
 What though our chaffer be neuer so dere,  
 Yet I auyse you to speke, for ony drede : 90  
 Who spareth to speke, in fayth he spareth to spede.

<sup>1</sup> *Garder*] Marzhe's ed. "*Garde*." Qy. "*Garden* ?"

Maystres, quod I, I haue none aquentaunce,  
 That wyll for me be medyatoure and mene ;  
 And this an other, I haue but smaale substaunce.  
 Pece, quod Desyre, ye speke not worth a bene :  
 Yf ye haue not, in fayth I wyll you lene  
 A precyous jewell, no rycher in this londe ;  
 Bone Auenture haue here now in your honde.

Shyfte now therwith, let see, as ye can,  
 In Bowge of Courte cheuysaunce to make ; 100  
 For I dare saye that there nys erthly man  
 But, an <sup>1</sup> he can Bone Auenture take,  
 There cau no fauour nor frendshyp hym forsake ;  
 Bone Auenture may brynge you in suche case  
 That ye shall stonde in fauoure and in grace.

But of one thyng I werne you er <sup>2</sup> I goo,  
 She that styreth the shyp, make her your frende.  
 Maystres, quod I, I praye you tell me why soo,  
 And how I maye that waye and meanes fynde.  
 Forsothe, quod she, how euer blowe the 110  
 wynde  
 Fortune gydeth and ruleth all oure shyppe :  
 Whome she hateth shall ouer the see boorde skyp ;

Whome she loueth, of all plesyre is ryche,  
 Whyles she laugheth and hath luste for to playe ;  
 Whome she hateth, she casteth in the dyche,

<sup>1</sup> *om*] W. de Worde's ed. P. L. C., and Marhe's ed. "and."

<sup>2</sup> *er*] W. de Worde's ed. P. L. C., "or."

For whan she frouneth, she thynketh to make  
a fray ;

She cheryssheth him, and hym she casseth<sup>1</sup>  
awaye.

Alas, quod I, how myghte I haue her sure ?  
In fayth, quod she, by Bone Auenture.

Thus, in a rowe, of martchauntes a grete route<sup>120</sup>  
Suwed to Fortune that she wold be theyre  
frynde :

They thronge in fast, and flocked her aboute ;  
And I with them prayed her to haue in mynde.

She promysed to vs all she wolde be kynde :  
Of Bowge of Court she asketh what we wold haue ;  
And we asked Fauoure, and Fauour she vs gaue.

*Thus endeth the Prologue ; and begynneth the  
Bowge of Courte breuely compyled.*

#### DREDE.

The sayle is vp, Fortune ruleth our helme,  
We wante no wynd to passe now ouer all ;  
Fauoure we haue tougher than ony elme,  
That wyll abyde and neuer from vs fall :<sup>120</sup>  
But vnder hony ofte tyme lyeth bytter gall ;  
For, as me thoughte, in our shyppe I dyde see  
Full subtyll persones, in nombre foure and thre.

<sup>1</sup> *casseth*] W. de Worde's ed. P. L. C., "casteth." Marhe's  
ed. "chasseth."

The fyrste was Fauell, full of flatery,  
 Wyth fables false that well coude fayne a  
 tale ;  
 The seconde was Suspecte, whiche that dayly  
 Mysdempte eche man, with face deedly and  
 pale ;  
 And Haruy Hafter,<sup>1</sup> that well coude picke a  
 male ;  
 With other foure of theyr affynyte,  
 Dysdayne, Ryotte, Dyssymuler, Subtylte. 140

Fortune theyr frende, with whome oft she dyde  
 daunce ;  
 They coude not faile, thei thought, they were  
 so sure ;  
 And oftentimes I wolde myselfe auance  
 With them to make solace and pleasure ;  
 But my dysporte they coude not well en-  
 dure ;  
 They sayde they hated for to dele with Drede.  
 Than Fauell gan wyth fayre speche me to fede.

## FAUELL.

Noo thyng erthely that I wonder so sore  
 As of your connynge, that it is so excellent ;  
 Deynte to haue with vs suche one in store, 150  
 So vertuously that hath his dayes spente :  
 Fortune to you gyftes of grace hath lente :  
 Loo, what it is a man to haue connynge !  
 All erthly tresoure it is surmountynge.

<sup>1</sup> *Hafter*] Eds. "Haster." See notes.



Ye be an apte man, as ony can be founde,  
 To dwell with vs, and serue my ladyes grace ;  
 Ye be to her yea worth a thousande pounce ;  
 I herde her speke of you within shorte space,  
 Whan there were dyuerse that sore dyde you  
 manace ;  
 And, though I say it, I was myselfe your frende,  
 For here be dyuerse to you that be vnkynde. 161

But this one thyng ye maye be sure of me ;  
 For, by that Lorde that bought dere all man-  
 kynde,  
 I can not flater, I muste be playne to thé ;  
 And ye nede ought, man, shewe to me your  
 mynde,  
 For ye haue me whome faythfull ye shall fynde ;  
 Whyles I haue ought, by God, thou shalt not  
 lacke,  
 And yf nede be, a bolde worde I dare cracke.

Nay, naye, be sure, whyles I am on your syde,  
 Ye maye not fall, truste me, ye maye not 170  
 fayle ;  
 Ye stonde in fauoure, and Fortune is your gyde,  
 And, as she wyll, so shall our grete shyppe  
 sayle :  
 Thyse lewde cok wattes shall neuer more pre-  
 uayle  
 Ageynste you hardely, therfore be not afrayde :  
 Farewell tyll soone ; but no worde that I sayde.

## DREDE.

Than thanked I hym for his grete gentylnes :

But, as me thoughte, he ware on hym a cloke,  
That lyned was with doubtfull doublenes ;

Me thoughte, of wordes that he had full a poke ;

His stomak stuffed ofte tymes dyde reboke : 180  
Suspicyon, me thoughte, mette hym at a brayde,  
And I drewe nere to herke what they two  
sayde.

In faythe, quod Suspecte, spake Drede no worde  
of me ?

Why, what than ? wylte thou lete men to  
speke ?

He sayth, he can not well accorde with thé.

Twyst,<sup>1</sup> quod Suspecte, goo playe, hym I ne  
reke.

By Cryste, quod Fauell, Drede is soleyne  
freke :

What lete vs holde him vp, man, for a whyle ?

Ye soo, quod Suspecte, he maye vs bothe begyle.

And whan he came walkynge soberly, 180

Wyth whom and ha, and with a croked loke,

Me thoughte, his hede was full of gelousy,

His eyne rollynge, his hondes faste they  
quake ;

And to me warde the strayte waye he toke :

<sup>1</sup> *Twyst*] W. de Worde's ed. P. L. C., "Whist." Marthe's  
ed. "Twysshē."

God spede, broder ! to me quod he than ;  
And thus to talke with me he began.

## SUSPYCYON.

Ye remembre the gentylman ryghte nowe  
That commaunde with you, me thought, a party  
space ? <sup>1</sup>

Beware of him, for, I make God auowe,  
He wyll begyle you and speke fayre to your  
face ;

Ye neuer dwelte in suche an other place, <sup>201</sup>  
For here is none that dare well other truste ;  
But I wolde telle you a thyng, and I durste.

Spake he a fayth no worde to you of me ?  
I wote, and he dyde, ye wolde me telle.  
I haue a fauoure to you, wherof it be  
That I muste shewe you moche of my counselle :  
But I wonder what the deuyll of helle  
He sayde of me, whan he with you dyde talke :  
By myne auyse vse not with him to walke. <sup>210</sup>

The soueraynst thyng that ony man maye haue,  
Is lytyll to saye, and moche to here and see ;  
For, but I trusted you, so God me saue,  
I wolde noo thyng so playne be ;  
To you only, me thynke, I durste shryue me ;

<sup>1</sup> *a party space*] So W. de Worde's ed. P. L. C. Other eds.  
"*a party spake*." Qy. "*a praty* (pretty) space?"

For now am I plenarely dysposed  
 To shewe you thynges that may not be dis-  
 closed.

## DREDE.

Than I assured hym my fydelyte,  
 His counseyle secrete neuer to dyscure,  
 Yf he coude fynde in herte to truste me ; 220  
 Els I prayed hym, with all my besy cure,  
 To kepe it hymselfe, for than he myghte be sure  
 That noo man erthly coude hym bewreye,  
 Whyles of hys mynde it were lockte with the keye.

By God, quod he, this and thus it is ;  
 And of his mynde he shewed me all and some.  
 Farewell, quod he, we wyll talke more of this :  
 Soo he departed there he wolde be come.  
 I dare not speke, I promysed to be dome :  
 But, as I stode musynge in my mynde, 230  
 Haruy Hafter came lepynge, lyghte as lynde.

Vpon his breste he bare a versynge boxe ;  
 His throte was clere, and lustely coude fayne ;  
 Me thoughte, his gowne was all furred wyth foxe ;  
 And euer he sange, Sythe I am no thyng  
 playne.  
 To kepe him frome pykyng it was a grete  
 payne :  
 He gased on me with his gotyshe berde ;  
 Whan I loked on hym, my purse was half aferde.

## HARUY HAFTER.

Syr, God you saue! why loke ye so sadde?

What thyng is that I maye do for you? 200

A wonder thyng that ye waxe not madde!

For, and I studye sholde as ye doo nowe,

My wytte wolde waste, I make God anowe.

Tell me your mynde: me thynke, ye make a  
verse;

I coude it skan, and ye wolde it reherse.

But to the poynte shortely to procede,

Where hathe your dwellynge ben, er ye cam  
here?

For, as I trowe, I haue sene you indede

Er this, whan that ye made me royall chere.

Holde vp the helme, loke vp, and lete God stere:  
I wolde be mery, what wynde that euer blowe, 21  
Heue and how rombelow, row the bote, Norman,  
rowe!

Prynces of yougthe can ye synge by rote?

Or shall I sayle wyth you a felashyp assaye;  
For on the booke I can not synge a note.

Wolde to God, it wolde please you some daye

A balade boke before me for to laye,  
And lerne me to synge, Re, my, fa, sol!  
And, whan I fayle, bobbe me on the noll.

Loo, what is to you a pleasure grete, 220

To haue that connyng and wayes that ye haue!

By Goddis soule, I wonder how ye gete  
 Soo greate pleasyre, or who to you it gaue :  
 Syr, pardone me, I am an homely knaue,  
 To be with you thus perte and thus bolde ;  
 But ye be welcome to our housholde.

And, I dare saye, there is no man here inne  
 But wolde be glad of your company :  
 I wyste neuer man that so soone coude wynne  
 The fauoure that ye haue with my lady ; 370  
 I praye to God that it maye neuer dy :  
 It is your fortune for to haue that grace ;  
 As I be saued, it is a wonder case.

For, as for me, I serued here many a daye,  
 And yet vnneth I can haue my lyuynge :  
 But I requyre you no worde that I saye ;  
 For, and I knowe ony erthly thyng  
 That is agayne you, ye shall haue wetyng :  
 And ye be welcome, syr, so God me saue :  
 I hope here after a frende of you to haue. 380

## DREDE.

Wyth that, as he departed soo fro me,  
 Anone ther mette with him, as me thoughte,  
 A man, but wonderly besene was he ;  
 He loked hawte, he sette eche man at  
 noughte ;  
 His gawdy garment with scornys was all  
 wrought ;

With indygnacyon lyned was his hode ;  
 He frowned, as he wolde swere by Cockes  
 blode ;

He bote the lyppe, he loked passynge coye ;  
 His face was belymmed, as byes had him  
 stounge :

It was no tyme with him to jape nor toye ;      290  
 Enuye hathe wasted his lyuer and his lounge,  
 Hatred by the herte so had hym wrounge,  
 That he loked pale as asshes to my syghte :  
 Dysdayne, I wene, this comerous crabes hyghte.

To Heruy Hafter than he spake of me,  
 And I drewe nere to harke what they two sayde.  
 Now, quod Dysdayne, as I shall saued be,  
 I haue grete scorne, and am ryghte euyll  
 apayed.

Than quod Heruy, why arte thou so dysmayde ?  
 By Cryste, quod he, for it is shame to saye ;      300  
 To see Johan Dawes, that came but yester daye,

How he is now taken in conceyte,  
 This doctour Dawcocke, Drede, I wene, he  
 hyghte :

By Goddis bones, but yf we haue som sleyte,  
 It is lyke he wyll stonde in our lyghte.

By God, quod Heruy, and it so happen myghte ;  
 Lete vs therfore shortely at a worde  
 Fynde some mene to caste him ouer the borde.

By Him that me boughte, than quod Dysdayne,  
 I wonder sore he is in suche conceyte. 310  
 Turde, quod Hafter, I wyll thé no thyng layne,  
 There muste for hym be layde some prety beyte ;  
 We tweyne, I trowe, be not withoute dysceyte :  
 Fyrste pycke a quarell, and fall oute with hym  
 then,  
 And soo outface hym with a carde of ten.

Forthwith he made on me a prowde assawte,  
 With scornfull loke meuyd all in moode ;  
 He wente aboute to take me in a fawte ;  
 He frounde, he stared, he stampped where he  
 stoode.  
 I lokyd on hym, I wende he had be woode. 320  
 He sent the arme proudly vnder the syde,  
 And in this wyse he gan with me to chyde.

## DISDAYNE.

Remembrest thou what thou sayd yester nyght ?  
 Wylt thou abyde by the wordes agayne ?  
 By God, I haue of thé now grete dyspyte ;  
 I shall thé angre ones in euery vayne :  
 It is greate scorne to see suche an hayne  
 As thou arte, one that cam but yesterdaye,  
 With vs olde seruauntes suche maysters to playe.

I tell thé, I am of countenance : 330  
 What weneste I were ? I trowe, thou knowe  
 not me.



By Goddis woundes, but for dysplesaunce,  
 Of my querell soone wolde I venged be :  
 But no force, I shall ones mete with thé ;  
 Come whan it wyll, oppose thé I shall,  
 What someuer auenture therof fall.

Trowest thou, dreuyll, I saye, thou gawdy knaue,  
 That I haue deynte to see thé cherysshed thus ?  
 By Goddis syd, my sworde thy berde shall shaue ;  
 Well, ones thou shalte be chermed, I wus : 300  
 Naye, strawe for tales, thou shalte not rule vs ;  
 We be thy betters, and so thou shalte vs take,  
 Or we shall thé oute of thy clothes shake.

## DREDE.

Wyth that came Ryotte, russhynge all at ones,  
 A rusty gallande, to-ragged and to-rente ;  
 And on the borde he whyrled a payre of bones,  
*Quater treye dewes* he clattered as he wente ;  
 Now haue at all, by saynte Thomas of Kente !  
 And euer he threwe and kyst I wote nere what :  
 His here was growen thorowe oute his hat. 300

Thenne I behelde how he dysgysed was :  
 His hede was heuy for watchynge ouer nyghte,  
 His even blereed, his face shone lyke a glas ;  
 His gowne so shorte that it ne couer myghte  
 His rumpe, he wente so all for somer lyghte ;  
 His hose was garded wyth a lyste of grene,  
 Yet at the knee they were broken, I wene.

His cote was checked with patches rede and blewe ;  
 Of Kyrkeby Kendall was his shorte demye ;  
 And ay he sange, In fayth, decon thou crewe ; 360  
 His elbowe bare, he ware his gere so nye ;  
 His nose a droppynge, his lypes were full drye ;  
 And by his syde his whynarde and his pouche,  
 The deuyll myghte daunce therin for ony crowche.

Counter he coude *O lux* vpon a potte ;  
 An eestryche fedder of a capons tayle  
 He set vp fresshely vpon his hat alofte :  
 What, reuell route ! quod he, and gan to rayle  
 How oft he hadde hit Jenet on the tayle,  
 Of Felyce fetewse, and lytell prety Cate, 370  
 How ofte he knocked at her klycked gate.

What sholde I tell more of his rebaudrye ?  
 I was ashamed so to here hym prate :  
 He had no pleasure but in harlotrye.  
 Ay, quod he, in the deuylls date,  
 What art thou ? I sawe thé nowe but late.  
 Forsothe, quod I, in this courte I dwell nowe.  
 Welcome, quod Ryote, I make God auowe.

## RYOTE.

And, syr, in fayth why comste not vs amonge,  
 To make thé mery, as other felowes done ? 380  
 Thou muste swere an<sup>d</sup> stare, man, al daye longe,  
 And wake all nyghte, and slepe tyll it be none ;  
 Thou mayste not studye, or muse on the mone ;

This worlde is nothyng but ete, drynke, and slepe,  
And thus with vs good company to kepe.

Plucke vp thyne herte vpon a mery pyne,  
And lete vs laugh a placke or tweyne at nale :  
What the deuyll, man, myrthe was neuer one !  
What, loo, man, see here of dyce a bale !  
A brydelynge caste for that is in thy male ! 300  
Now haue at all that lyeth vpon the burde !  
Fye on this dyce, they be not worth a turde !

Haue at the hasarde, or at the dosen browne,  
Or els I pas a peny to a pounce !  
Now, wolde to God, thou wolde leye money downe !  
Lorde, how that I wolde caste it full rounde !  
Ay, in my pouche a buckell I haue founde !  
The armes of Calyce, I haue no coyne nor crosse !  
I am not happy, I renne ay on the losse.

Now renne muste I to the stewys syde, 400  
To wete yf Malkyn, my lemman, haue gete  
oughte :  
I lete her to hyre, that men maye on her ryde,  
Her armes easy ferre and nere is soughte :  
By Goddis sydes, syns I her thyder broughte,  
She hath gote me more money with her tayle  
Than hath some shyppe that into Bordews sayle.

<sup>1</sup> *placke*] Marshe's ed. "plucke,"—perhaps the right reading.

Had I as good an hors as she is a mare,  
 I durst auenture to iourney through Fraunce ;  
 Who rydeth on her, he nedeth not to care,  
 For she is trussed for to breke a launce ; 410  
 It is a curtel that well can wynche and prauunce :  
 To her wyll I nowe all my pouerte lege ;  
 And, tyll I come, haue here is myne hat to  
 plege.

## DREDE.

Gone is this knaue, this rybaude foule and leude ;  
 He ran as fast as euer that he myghte :  
 Vnthryftynes in hym may well be shewed,  
 For whome Tyborne groneth both daye and  
 nyghte.  
 And, as I stode and kyste asyde my syghte,  
 Dysdayne I sawe with Dyssymulacyon  
 Standynge in sadde comunicacion. 420

But there was poyntyng and noddynge with the  
 hede,  
 And many wordes sayde in secrete wyse ;  
 They wandred ay, and stode styll in no stede :  
 Me thoughte, alwaye Dyscymular dyde deuyse ;  
 Me passynge sore myne herte than gan agryse,<sup>1</sup>  
 I dempte and drede theyr talkynge was not  
 good.  
 Anone Dyscymular came where I stode.

<sup>1</sup> *agryse*] Eds. "aryse." See notes.

Than in his hode I sawe there faces tweyne ;  
 That one was lene and lyke a pyned goost,  
 That other loked as he wolde me haue slayne ; 450  
 And to me warde as he gan for to coost,  
 Whan that he was euen at me almoost,  
 I sawe a knyfe hyd in his one sleue,  
 Wheron was wryten this worde, *Myscheue*.

And in his other sleue, me thought, I sawe  
 A spone of golde, full of hony swete,  
 To fede a fole, and for to preue a dawe ;  
 And on that sleue these wordes were wrete,  
*A false abstracte cometh from a fals concrete :*  
 His hode was syde, his cope was roset graye : 460  
 Thyse were the wordes that he to me dyde saye.

## DYSSYMLATION.

How do ye, mayster ? ye loke so soberly :  
 As I be saued at the dredefull daye,  
 It is a perylous vyce, this enuy :  
 Alas, a connynge man ne dwelle maye  
 In no place well, but foles with hym fraye !  
 But as for that, connynge hath no foo  
 Saue hym that nought can, Scrypture sayth soo.

I knowe your vertu and your lytterature  
 By that lytel connynge that I haue : 460  
 Ye be malygned sore, I you ensure ;  
 But ye haue crafte your selfe alwaye to saue :  
 It is grete scorne to se a mysproude knaue

With a clerke that connyng is to prate :  
Lete theym go lowse theym, in the deuylls date !

For all be it that this longe not to me,  
Yet on my backe I bere suche lewde delynge :  
Ryghte now I spake with one, I trowe, I see ;  
But, what, a strawe ! I maye not tell all thyng.  
By God, I saye there is grete herte brennyng  
Betwene the persone ye wote of, you ; 461  
Alas, I coude not dele so with a Jew !

I wolde eche man were as playne as I ;  
It is a worlde, I saye, to here of some ;  
I hate this faynyng, fye vpon it, fye !  
A man can not wote where to be come :  
I wys I coude tell,—but humlery, home ;  
I dare not speke, we be so layde awayte,  
For all our courte is full of dysceyte. 462

Now, by saynte Fraunceys, that holy man and  
frere,  
I hate these wayes agayne you that they take :  
Were I as you, I wolde ryde them full nere ;  
And, by my trouthe, but yf an ende they make,  
Yet wyll I saye some wordes for your sake,  
That shall them angre, I holde thereon a grote ;  
For some shall wene be hanged by the throte.

I haue a stoppyng oyster in my poke,  
Truste me, and yf it come to a nede :

But I am lothe for to reyse a smoke,  
 Yf ye coude be otherwyse agrede ; 488  
 And so I wolde it were, so God me spede,  
 For this maye brede to a confusyon,  
 Withoute God make a good conclusyon.

Naye, see where yonder stondesth the teder man !  
 A flaterynge knaue and false he is, God wote ;  
 The dreuyll stondesth to herken, and he can :  
 It were more thryft, he boughte him a newe cote ;  
 It will not be, his purse is not on flote :  
 All that he wereth, it is borrowed ware ;  
 His wytte is thynne, his hode is threde bare. 490

More coude I saye, but what this is ynowe :  
 Adewe tyll soone, we shall speke more of this :  
 Ye muste be ruled as I shall tell you howe ;  
 Amendis maye be of that is now amys ;  
 And I am your, syr, so haue I blys,  
 In euery poynte that I can do or saye ;  
 Gyue me your honde, farewell, and haue good  
 daye.

## DREDE.

Sodaynly, as he departed me fro,  
 Came pressynge in one in a wonder araye :  
 Er I was ware, behynde me he sayde, Bo ! 500  
 Thenne I, astonyed of that sodeyne fraye,  
 Sterte all at ones, I lyked no thyng his  
 playe ;

For, yf I had not quykely fledde the touche,  
He had plucte oute the nobles of my pouche.

He was trussed in a garmente strayte :  
I haue not sene suche an others page ;  
For he coude well vpon a casket wayte ;  
His hode all pounsed and garded lyke a cage ;  
Lyghte lyme fynger, he toke none other wage.  
Harken, quod he, loo here myne honde in thyne ;  
To vs welcome thou arte, by saynte Quyntyne. <sup>511</sup>

## DISCEYTE.

But, by that Lorde that is one, two, and thre,  
I haue an errande to rounde in your ere :  
He tolde me so, by God, ye maye truste me,  
Parte <sup>1</sup> remembre whan ye were there,  
There I wynked on you,—wote ye not where ?  
In *A loco*, I mene *juxta* B :  
Woo is hym that is blynde and maye not see !

But to here the subtylte and the crafte,  
As I shall tell you, yf ye wyll harke agayne ; <sup>520</sup>  
And, whan I sawe the horsons wolde you hafte,  
To holde myne honde, by God, I had grete  
payne ;  
For forthwyth there I had him slayne,  
But that I drede mordre wolde come oute :  
Who deleth with shrewes hath nede to loke aboute.

<sup>1</sup> *Parte*] Qy. "Parde" (*Par dieu*—in sooth)?



## DREDE.

And as he rounded thus in myne ere  
Of false collusyon confetryd by assente,  
Me thoughte, I see lewde felawes here and there  
Came for to slee me of mortall entente ;     528  
And, as they came, the shypborde faste I hente,  
And thoughte to lepe ; and euen with that woke,  
Caughte penne and ynke, and wrote thys lytyll  
boke.

I wolde therwith no man were myscontente ;  
Besechynge you that shall it see or rede,  
In euery poynte to be indyfferente,  
Syth all in substaunce of slumbrynge doth pro-  
cede :

I wyll not saye it is mater in dede,  
But yet oftyme suche dremes be founde trewe :  
Now constrewe ye what is the resydewe.

*Thus endeth the Bowge of Courte.*

HERE AFTER FOLOWETH THE BOKE OF

PHYLLYP SPAROWE.

COMPLYED BY MAYSTER SKELTON, POETE LAURRATE.\*

*Pla ce bo,*  
 Who is there, who?  
*Di le xi,*  
 Dame Margery ;  
 Fa, re, my, my,  
 Wherfore and why, why?  
 For the sowle of Philip Sparowe,  
 That was late slayn at Carowe,  
 Among the Nones Blake,  
 For that swete soules sake, 10  
 And for all sparowes soules,  
 Set in our bederolles,  
*Pater noster qui,*  
 With an *Ave Mari*,  
 And with the corner of a Crede,  
 The more shalbe your mede.  
 Whan I remember agayn  
 How mi Philyp was slayn,

\* From the ed. by Kele, n. d., collated with that by Kitson, n. d. (which in some copies is said to be printed by Weale,) and with Marthe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568.

Neuer halfe the payne  
Was betwene you twayne,  
Pyramus and Thesbe,  
As than befell to me :  
I wept and I wayled,  
The tearys downe hayled ;  
But nothyng it auayled  
To call Phylp agayne,  
Whom Gyb our cat hath slayne.

20

Gib, I saye, our cat  
Worrowyd her on that  
Which I loued best :  
It can not be exprest  
My sorrowfull heuynesse,  
But all without redresse ;  
For within that stounde,  
Halfe slumbrynge, in a sounde  
I fell downe to the grounde.

30

Vnneth I kest myne eyes  
Towarde the cloudy skyes :  
But whan I dyd beholde  
My sparow dead and colde,  
No creatuer but that wolde  
Haue rewed vpon me,  
To behold and se  
What heuynesse dyd me pange ;  
Wherewith my handes I wrange,  
That my senaws cracked,  
As though I had been racked,

40

So payned and so strayned,  
That no lyfe wellnye remayned.

I syghed and I sobbed, 50  
For that I was robbed  
Of my sparowes lyfe.  
O mayden, wydow, and wyfe,  
Of what estate ye be,  
Of hye or lowe degre,  
Great sorowe than ye myght se  
And lerne to wepe at me!  
Such paynes dyd me frete,  
That myne hert dyd bete,  
My vysage pale and dead, 60  
Wanne, and blewe as lead;  
The panges of hatefull death  
Wellnye had stopped my breath.

*Heu, heu, me,*  
That I am wo for thé!  
*Ad Dominum, cum tribularer, clamavi.*  
Of God nothyng els craue I  
But Phyllypes soule to kepe  
From the marees deepe  
Of Acherontes well, 70  
That is a flode of hell;  
And from the great Pluto,  
The prynce of endles wo;  
And from foule Alecto,  
With vysage blacke and blo;  
And from Medusa, that mare,  
That lyke a fende doth stare:

And from Megeras edders,  
 For rufflynge of Phillips fethers,  
 And from her fyry sparklynges, 80  
 For burnynge of his wynges ;  
 And from the smokes sowre  
 Of Proserpinas bowre ;  
 And from the dennes darke,  
 Wher Cerberus doth barke,  
 Whom Theseus dyd afraye,  
 Whom Hercules dyd outraye,  
 As famous poetes say ;  
 From that hell hounde,  
 That lyeth in cheynes bounde, 90  
 With gastly hedes thre,  
 To Jupyter pray we  
 That Phyllyp preserued may be !  
 Amen, say ye with me !

*Do mi nus,*

Helpe nowe, swete Jesus !  
*Leuari oculos meos in montes :*  
 Wolde God I had Zenophontes,  
 Or Socrates the wyse,  
 To shew me their deuyse, 100  
 Moderatly to take  
 This sorow that I make  
 For Phyllip Sparowes sake !  
 So feruently I shake,  
 I fele my body quake ;  
 So vrgently I am brought  
 Into carefull thought.

Like Andromach, Hectors wyfe,  
Was wery of her lyfe,  
Whan she had lost her ioye,  
Noble Hector of Troye ;  
In lyke maner also  
Encreaseth my dedly wo,  
For my sparowe is go.

110

It was so prety a fole,  
It wold syt on a stole,  
And lerned after my scole  
For to kepe his cut,  
With, Phyllyp, kepe your cut !

It had a veluet cap,  
And wold syt vpon my lap,  
And seke after small wormes,  
And somtyme white bred crommes ;  
And many tymes and ofte  
Betwene my brestes softe  
It wolde lye and rest ;  
It was propre and prest.

120

Somtyme he wolde gaspe  
Whan he sawe a waspe ;  
A fly or a gnat,  
He wolde flye at that ;  
And prytely he wold pant  
Whan he saw an ant ;  
Lord, how he wolde pry  
After the butterfly !  
Lorde, how he wolde hop  
After the gressop !

130

And whan I sayd, Phyp, Phyp,  
Than he wold lepe and skyp,  
And take me by the lyp.

140

Alas, it wyll me slo,  
That Phyllyp is gone me fro !

*Sin in i qui ta tes*

Alas, I was euyl at ease !  
*De pro fun dis cla ma vi,*  
Whan I sawe my sparowe dye !

Nowe, after my dome,  
Dame Sulpicia at Rome,  
Whose name registryed was  
For euer in tables of bras,  
Because that she dyd pas  
In poesy to endyte,  
And eloquently to wryte,  
Though she wolde pretende  
My sparowe to commende,  
I trowe she coude not amende  
Reportyng the vertues all  
Of my sparowe royall.

150

For it wold come and go,  
And fly so to and fro ;  
And on me it wolde lepe  
Whan I was aslepe,  
And his fethers shake,  
Wherewith he wolde make  
Me often for to wake,  
And for to take him in  
Vpon my naked skyn ;

160

God wot, we thought no syn :  
 What though he crept so lowe ?  
 It was not hurt, I trowe, 170  
 He dyd nothyng perde  
 But syt vpon my kne :  
 Phyllip, though he were nyse,  
 In him it was no vyse ;  
 Phyllip had leue to go  
 To pyke my lytell too ;  
 Phillip myght be bolde  
 And do what he wolde ;  
 Phillip wolde seke and take  
 All the flees blake 180  
 That he coulde there espye  
 With his wanton eye.

*O pe ra,*

La, soll, fa, fa,

*Confitebor tibi, Domine, in toto corde meo.*

Alas, I wold ryde and go  
 A thousand myle of grounde !  
 If any such might be found,  
 It were worth an hundreth pound  
 Of kynge Cresus golde, 190  
 Or of Attalus the olde,  
 The ryche prynce of Pargame,  
 Who so lyst the story to se.  
 Cadmus, that his syster sought,  
 And he shold be bought  
 For golde and fee,  
 He shuld ouer the see,



To wete if he coulde brynge  
Auy of the ofsprynge,  
Or any of the blode. 200  
But whoso vnderstode  
Of Medeas arte,  
I wolde I had a parte  
Of her crafty magyke !  
My sparowe than shuld be quycke  
With a charme or twayne,  
And playe with me agayne.  
But all this is in vayne  
Thus for to complayne.

I toke my sampler ones, 210  
Of purpose, for the nones,  
To sowe with stytychis of sylke  
My sparow whyte as mylke,  
That by representacyon  
Of his image and facyon,  
To me it myght importe  
Some pleasure and comferte  
For my solas and sporte :  
But whan I was sowing his beke,  
Methought my sparow did speke, 220  
And opened his prety byll,  
Saynge, Mayde, ye are in wyll  
Agayne me for to kyll,  
Ye prycke me in the head !  
With that my nedle waxed red,  
Methought, of Phyllyps blode ;  
Myne hear ryght vpstode,

And was in suche a fray,  
 My speche was taken away.  
 I kest downe that there was, 280  
 And sayd, Alas, alas,  
 How commeth this to pas?  
 My fyngers, dead and colde,  
 Coude not my sampler holde;  
 My nedle and threde  
 I threwe away for drede.  
 The best now that I maye,  
 Is for his soule to pray:  
*A porta inferi,*  
 Good Lorde, haue mercy 290  
 Vpon my sparowes soule,  
 Wryten in my bederoule!  
*Au di vi vo cem,*  
 Japhet, Cam, and Sem,  
*Ma gni fi cat,*  
 Shewe me the ryght path  
 To the hylles of Armony,  
 Wherfore the birdes<sup>1</sup> yet cry  
 Of your fathers bote,  
 That was sometyme aflote, 300  
 And nowe they lye and rote;  
 Let some poetes wryte  
 Deucalyons flode it hyght:  
 But as verely as ye be  
 The naturall sonnes thre

<sup>1</sup> *birdes*] So other eds. Kele's ed. "bordes," which, perhaps, is the right reading. See notes.

Of Noe the patryarke,  
 That made that great arke,  
 Wherin he had apes and owles,  
 Beestes, byrdes, and foules,  
 That if ye can fynde  
 Any of my sparowes kynde,  
 God send the soule good rest !  
 I wolde haue yet a nest  
 As prety and as prest  
 As my sparowe was.  
 But my sparowe dyd pas  
 All the sparows of the wode  
 That were syns Noes flode,  
 Was neuer none so good ;  
 Kynge Phylp of Macedony  
 Had no such Phylp as I,  
 No, no, syr, hardely.

260

270

That vengeaunce I aske and crye,  
 By way of exclamacyon,  
 On all the hole nacyon  
 Of cattes wylde and tame ;  
 God send them sorowe and shame !  
 That cat specyally  
 That slew so cruelly  
 My lytell prety sparowe  
 That I brought vp at Carowe.

280

O cat of carlyshe kynde,  
 The fynde was in thy mynde  
 Whan thou my byrde vntwynde !  
 I wold thou haddest ben blynde !

The leoparden sauage,  
 The lyons in theyr rage,  
 Myght catche thé in theyr pawes,  
 And gnawe thé in theyr iawes !  
 The serpentes of Lybany  
 Myght styngé thé venymously !  
 The dragones with their tonges  
 Might poyson thy lyuer aud longes !  
 The mantycors of the mountaynes  
 Myght fede them on thy braynes !

290

Melanchates, that hounde  
 That plucked Acteon to the grounde,  
 Gaue hym his mortall wounde,  
 Chaunged to a dere,  
 The story doth appere,  
 Was chaunged to an harte :  
 So thou, foule cat that thou arte,  
 The selfe same hounde  
 Myght thé confounde,  
 That his owne lord bote,  
 Myght byte asondre thy throte !

300

Of Inde the gredy grypes  
 Myght tere out all thy trypes !  
 Of Arcady the beares  
 Might plucke away thyne eares !  
 The wylde wolfe Lycaon  
 Byte asondre thy backe bone !  
 Of Ethna the brennyngé hyll,  
 That day and night brenneth styl  
 Set in thy tayle a blase,

310

That all the world may gase  
And wonder vpon thé,  
From Occyan the greate se  
Vnto the Iles of Orchady,  
From Tyllbery fery 330  
To the playne of Salysbery !  
So trayterously my byrde to kyll  
That neuer ought thé euyl wyll !

Was neuer byrde in cage  
More gentle of corage  
In doynge his homage  
Vnto his souerayne.  
Alas, I say agayne,  
Deth hath departed vs twayne !  
The false cat hath thé slayne : 335  
Farewell, Phyllyp, adew !  
Our Lorde thy soule reskew !  
Farewell without restore,  
Farewell for euermore !

And it were a Jewe,  
It wolde make one rew,  
To se my sorow new.  
These vyланous false cattes  
Were made for myse and rattes,  
And not for byrdes smale. 340  
Alas, my face waxeth pale,  
Tellyngè this pyteyus tale,  
How my byrde so fayre,  
That was wont to repayre,  
And go in at my spayre,

And crepe in at my gore <sup>1</sup>  
 Of my gowne before,  
 Flyckerynge with his wynges !  
 Alas, my hert it stynges,  
 Remembrynge prety thynges !  
 Alas, myne hert it sleth  
 My Phyllyppes dolefull deth,  
 Whan I remembre it,  
 How pretely it wolde syt,  
 Many tymes and ofte  
 Vpon my fynger aloft !  
 I played with him tyttell tattyll,  
 And fed him with my spattyl,  
 With his byll betwene my lippes ;  
 It was my prety Phyppes !  
 Many a prety kusse  
 Had I of his swete musse ;  
 And now the cause is thus,  
 That he is slayne me fro,  
 To my great payne and wo.  
 Of fortune this the chaunce  
 Standeth on varyaunce :  
 Oft tyme after pleasaunce  
 Trouble and greuaunce ;  
 No man can be sure  
 Allway to haue pleasure :

360

360

370

<sup>1</sup> Kitson's ed. ;

*" And often at my spayre  
 And gape in at my gore."*

As well perceyue ye maye  
 How my dysport and play  
 From me was taken away  
 By Gyb, our cat sauage,  
 That in a furyous rage  
 Caught Phyllyp by the head,  
 And slew him there starke dead.

*Kyrie, eleison,  
 Christe, eleison,  
 Kyrie, eleison !*

300

For Phylp Sparowes soule,  
 Set in our bederolle,  
 Let vs now whysper  
 A *Pater noster*.

*Lauda, anima mea, Dominum !*  
 To wepe with me loke that ye come,  
 All manner of byrdes in your kynd ;  
 Se none be left behynde.  
 To mornynge loke that ye fall  
 With dolorous songes funerall,  
 Some to synge, and some to say,  
 Some to wepe, and some to pray,  
 Euery byrde in his laye.  
 The goldfynche, the wagtayle ;  
 The ianglynge iay to rayle,  
 The fleckyd pye to chatter  
 Of this dolorous mater ;  
 And robyn redbrest,  
 He shall be the preest  
 The requiem masse to synge,

300

400

Softly warbelynge,  
 With helpe of the red sparow,  
 And the chattrynge swallow,  
 This herse for to halow ;  
 The larke with his longe to ;  
 The spyneke, and the martynet also ;  
 The shouelar with his brode bek ;  
 The doterell, that folyshe pek,  
 And also the mad coote,  
 With a balde face to toote ;  
 The feldefare, and the snyte ;  
 The crowe, and the kyte ;  
 The rauyn, called Rolfe,  
 His playne songe to solfe ;  
 The partryche, the quayle ;  
 The plouer with vs to wayle ;  
 The woodhacke, that syngeth chur  
 Horsly, as he had the mur ;  
 The lusty chauntyng nyghtyngale ;  
 The popyngay to tell her tale,  
 That toteth oft in a glasse,  
 Shal rede the Gospell at masse ;  
 The mauys with her whystell  
 Shal rede there the pystell.  
 But with a large and a longe  
 To kepe iust playne songe,  
 Our chaunters shalbe the cuckoue,  
 The culuer, the stockedowue,  
 With puwyt the lapwyng,  
 The versycles shall syng.

410

420

430



The bitter with his bumpe,  
The crane with his trumpe,  
The swan of Menander,  
The gose and the gander,  
The ducke and the drake,  
Shall watche at this wake ;  
The pecocke so prowde,  
Bycause his voyce is lowde,  
And hath a glorious taylor, 440  
He shall syng the grayle ;  
The owle, that is so foule,  
Must helpe vs to houle ;  
The heron so gaunce,  
And the cormoraunce,  
With the fesaunte,  
And the gaglynge gaunte,  
And the churlysshe chowgh ;  
The route and the kowgh ;  
The barnacle, the bussarde, 450  
With the wilde mallarde ;  
The dyuendop to slepe ;  
The water hen to wepe ;  
The puffin and the tele  
Money they shall dele  
To poore folke at large,  
That shall be theyr charge ;  
The semewe and the tytmouse ;  
The wodcocke with the longe nose ;  
The threstyl with her warblyng ; 460  
The starlyng with her brablyng ;

The roke, with the ospraye  
That putteth fysshes to a fraye ;  
And the denty curlewe,  
With the turtyll most trew.

At this *Placebo*

We may not well forgo  
The countrynge of the coe :  
The storke also,  
That maketh his nest  
In chymneyes to rest ;  
Within those walles  
No broken galles  
May there abyde  
Of cokoldry syde,  
Of els phylosophy  
Maketh a great lye.

470

The estryge, that wyll eate  
An horshowe so great,  
In the stede of meate,  
Such feruent heat  
His stomake doth freat ;  
He can not well fly,  
Nor synge tunably,  
Yet at a brayde  
He hath well assayde  
To solfe aboue ela,  
Ga,<sup>1</sup> lorell, fa, fa ;  
*Ne quando*  
*Male cantando,*

480

480

<sup>1</sup> Ga] Marabe's ed. "Fa."

The best that we can,  
 To make hym our belman,  
 And let hym ryng the bellys ;  
 He can do nothyng ellys.

Chaunteclere, our coke,  
 Must tell what is of the clocke  
 By the ostrology  
 That he hath naturally  
 Conceyued and cougth,  
 And was neuer taught  
 By Albumazer  
 The astronomer,  
 Nor by Ptholomy  
 Prince of astronomy,  
 Nor yet by Haly ;  
 And yet he croweth dayly  
 And nightly the tydes  
 That no man abydes,  
 With Partlot his hen,  
 Whom now and then  
 Hee plucketh by the hede  
 Whan he doth her trede.

500

510

The byrde of Araby,  
 That potencyally  
 May neuer dye,  
 And yet there is none  
 But one alone ;  
 A phenex it is  
 This herse that must blys  
 With armatycke gummes

520

That cost great summes,  
 The way of thurification  
 To make a fumigation,  
 Swete of reflary,<sup>1</sup>  
 And redolent of eyre,  
 This corse for to sence  
 With greate reuerence,  
 As patryarke or pope  
 In a blacke cope;  
 Whyles<sup>2</sup> he senseth [the herse],  
 He shall synge the verse,  
*Libera me,*  
 In de, la, soll, re,  
 Softly bemole  
 For my sparowes soule.  
 Plinni sheweth all  
 In his story naturall  
 What he doth fynde  
 Of the phenyx kynde;  
 Of whose incyneracyon  
 There ryseth a new creacyon  
 Of the same facyon  
 Without alteracyon,  
 Sauyng that olde age  
 Is turned into corage  
 Of fresshe youth agayne;  
 This matter trew and playne,

530

540

<sup>1</sup> *reflary*] Qy. "reflayre?"

<sup>2</sup> *Whyles*, &c.] So, perhaps, Skelton wrote: the line is imperfect in eds.

Playne matter indede,  
Who so lyst to rede.

But for the egle doth flye 550  
Hyst in the skye,  
He shall be the sedeane,  
The quere to demeane,  
As prouost pryncypall,  
To teach them theyr ordynall ;  
Also the noble fawcon,  
With the gerfawcon,  
The tarsell gentyll,  
They shall morne soft and styll  
In theyr amyse of gray ; 560  
The sacre with them shall say  
*Dirige* for Phyllyppes soule ;  
The goshaue shall haue a role  
The queresters to controll ;  
The lanners and the marlyons  
Shall stand in their morning gounes ;  
The hobby and the muskette  
The sensers and the crosse shall fet ;  
The kestrell in all this warke  
Shall be holy water clarke. 570

And now the darke cloudy nyght  
Chaseth away Phebus bryght,  
Taking his course toward the west,  
God sende my sparoes sole good rest !  
*Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine !*  
Fa, fa, fa, my, re, re,  
*A por ta in fe ri,*

Fa, fa, fa, my, my.

*Credo videre bona Domini,*

I pray God, Phillip to heuen may fly ! 500

*Domine, exaudi orationem meam !*

To heuen he shall, from heuen he cam !

*Do mi nus vo bis cum !*

Of al good praiers God send him sum !

*Oremus.*

*Deus, cui proprium est misereri et parcere,*

On Phillips soule haue pyte !

For he was a prety cocke,

And came of a gentyll stocke,

And wrapt in a maiden es smocke, 500

And cherysshed full dayntely,

Tyll cruell fate made him to dy :

Alas, for dolefull desteny !

But whereto shuld I

Lenger morne or crye ?

To Jupyter I call,

Of heuen emperyall,

That Phyllyp may fly

Above the starry sky,

To treade the prety wren, 600

That is our Ladyes hen :

Amen, amen, amen !

Yet one thyng is behynde,

That now commeth to mynde ;

An epytaphe I wold haue

For Phyllyppes graue :

But for I am a mayde,

VOL. I. 6

Tymerous, halfe afrayde,  
That neuer yet asayde  
Of Elyconys well, 610  
Where the Muses dwell ;  
Though I can rede and spell,  
Recounte, reporte, and tell  
Of the Tales of Caunterbury,  
Some sad storyes, some mery  
As Palamon and Arcet,  
Duke Theseus, and Partelet ;  
And of the Wyfe of Bath,  
That worketh moch scath  
Whan her tale is tolde 620  
Amonge huswyues bolde,  
How she controlde  
Her husbandes as she wolde,  
And them to despyse  
In the homylyest wyse,  
Brynge other wyues in thought  
Their husbandes to set at nought .  
And though that rede haue I  
Of Gawen and syr Guy,  
And tell can a great pece 630  
Of the Golden Flece,  
How Jason it wan,  
Lyke a valyaunt man ;  
Of Arturs rounde table,  
With his knyghtes commendable,  
And dame Gaynour, his quene,  
Was somewhat wanton, I wene ;

How syr Launcelote de Lake  
 Many a spere brake  
 For his ladyes sake ;  
 Of Trystram, and kynge Marke,  
 And al the hole warke  
 Of Bele Isold his wyfe,  
 For whom was moch stryfe ;  
 Some say she was lyght,  
 And made her husband knyght  
 Of the comyne hall,  
 That cuckoldes men call ;  
 And of syr Lybius,  
 Named Dysconius ;  
 Of Quater Fylz Amund,  
 And how they were sommonde  
 To Rome, to Charlemayne,  
 Vpon a great payne,  
 And how they rode eche one  
 On Bayarde Mountalbon ;  
 Men se hym now and then  
 In the forest of Arden :  
 What though I can frame  
 The storyes by name  
 Of Judas Machabeus,  
 And of Cesar Julious ;  
 And of the loue betwene  
 Paris and Vyene ;  
 And of the duke Hannyball,  
 That made the Romaines all  
 Fordrede and to quake ;  
 How Scipion dyd wake

640

650

660



The cytye of Cartage,  
Which by his vnmerciful rage 670  
He bete down to the grounde :  
And though I can expounde  
Of Hector of Troye,  
That was all theyr ioye,  
Whom Achylles slew,  
Wherfore all Troy dyd rew ;  
And of the loue so hote  
That made Troylus to dote  
Vpon fayre Cressyde,  
And what they wrote and sayd, 680  
And of theyr wanton wylles  
Pandaer bare the bylles  
From one to the other ;  
His maisters loue to further,  
Somtyme a presyous thyng,  
An ouche, or els a ryng ;  
From her to hym agayn  
Somtyme a prety chayn,  
Or a bracelet of her here,  
Prayd Troylus for to were 690  
That token for her sake ;  
How hartely he dyd it take,  
And moche therof dyd make  
And all that was in vayne,  
For she dyd but fayne ;  
The story telleth playne,  
He coude not optayne,  
Though his father were a kyng,  
Yet there was a thyng

That made the male to wryng ; 700  
She made him to syng  
The song of louers lay ;  
Musyng nyght and day,  
Mournynge all alone,  
Comfort had he none,  
For she was quyte gone ;  
Thus in conclusyon,  
She brought him in abusyon ;  
In earnest and in game  
She was moch to blame ; 710  
Disparaged is her fame,  
And blemysshed is her name,  
In maner half with shame ;  
Troylus also hath lost  
On her moch loue and cost,  
And now must kys the post ;  
Pandara, that went betwene,  
Hath won nothing, I wene,  
But lyght for somer grene ;  
Yet for a speciall laud 720  
He is named Troylus baud,  
Of that name he is sure  
Whyles the world shall dure :  
    Though I remembre the fable  
Of Penelope most stable  
To her husband most trew,  
Yet long tyme she ne knew  
Whether he were on lyue or ded ;  
Her wyt stood her in sted,

That she was true and just  
 For any lady lost  
 To Chace her make,  
 And never wold him forsake :

720

Of Marcus Marcellus  
 A piteous I could tell you ;  
 And of Antonius ;  
 And of Iosephus  
 In Antiquities ;  
 And of Mithridates,  
 And of great Annulus,  
 And of Vespa his queene,  
 Whom he forsoke with teene,  
 And of Hester his other wyfe,  
 With whom he led a plesaunt life ;  
 Of kyng Alexander ;  
 And of kyng Eumander ;  
 And of Porcena the great,  
 That made the Romayns to sweat :<sup>1</sup>

730

Though I haue enrold  
 A thousand new and old  
 Of these historious tales,  
 To fyll bougets and males  
 With booke that I haue red,  
 Yet I am nothing sped,  
 And can but lytell skyll  
 Of Ouyd or Virgyll,  
 Or of Plutarke,  
 Or Frauncys Petrарke,

740

<sup>1</sup> *second* Eds. "amare."

Alcheus or Sapho,  
 Or such other poetes mo,  
 As Linus and Homerus,  
 Euphorion and Theocritus,  
 Anacreon and Arion,  
 Sophocles and Philemon,  
 Pyndarus and Symonides,  
 Philistion and Phorocides ;  
 These poetes of auntyente,  
 They ar to diffuse for me :

700

For, as I tofore haue sayd,  
 I am but a yong mayd,  
 And cannot in effect  
 My style as yet direct  
 With Englysh wordes elect :  
 Our naturall tong is rude,  
 And hard to be enneude  
 With pullysshed termes lusty ;  
 Our language is so rusty,  
 So cankered, and so full  
 Of frowardes, and so dull,  
 That if I wolde apply  
 To wryte ornatly,  
 I wot not where to fynd  
 Termes to serue my mynde

700

700

Gowers Englysh is olde,  
 And of no value told ;  
 His mater is worth gold,  
 And worthy to be enrold.

In Chauser I am sped,  
 His tales I haue red :

His mater is delectable,  
 Solacious, and commendable ;  
 His Englysh well alowed,  
 So as it is enprowed,  
 For as it is employed,  
 There is no Englysh voyd,  
 At those dayes moch commended,  
 And now men wold haue amended  
 His Englysh, whereat they barke,  
 And mar all they warke :  
 Chaucer, that famus clérke,  
 His termes were not darke,  
 But plesaunt, easy, and playne ;  
 No worde he wrote in vayne.

790

800

Also Johnn Lydgate  
 Wryteth after an hyer rate ;  
 It is dyffuse to fynde  
 The sentence of his mynde,  
 Yet wryteth he in his kynd,  
 No man that can amend  
 Those maters that he hath pende ;  
 Yet some men fynde a faute,  
 And say he wryteth to haute.

810

Wherefore hold me excused  
 If I haue not well perused  
 Myne Englyssh halfe abused ;  
 Though it be refused,  
 In worth I shall it take,  
 And fewer wordes make.

But, for my sparowes sake,

Yet as a woman may,  
 My wyt I shall assay  
 An epytaphe to wryght  
 In Latyne playne and lyght,  
 Wherof the elegy  
 Foloweth by and by :  
*Flos volucrum formose, vale !*  
*Philippe, sub isto*  
*Marmore jam recubas,*  
*Qui mihi carus eras.*  
*Semper erunt nitido*  
*Radiantia sidera cælo ;*  
*Impressusque meo*  
*Pectore semper eris.*  
*Per me laurigerum*  
*Britonum Skeltonida vatem*  
*Hæc cecinisse licet*  
*Ficta sub imagine texta.*  
*Cujus eras<sup>1</sup> volucris,*  
*Præstanti corpore virgo ;*  
*Candida Nais erat,*  
*Formosior ista Joanna est ;*  
*Docta Corinna fuit,*  
*Sed magis ista sapit.*  
*Bien men souient.*

820

830

840

<sup>1</sup> eras] Eda. " eris."

## THE COMMENDACIONS.

*Beati im ma cu la ti in via,*  
*O gloriosa fœmina !*  
 Now myne hole imaginacion  
 And studyous medytacion  
 Is to take this commendacyon  
 In this consyderacion ;  
 And vnder pacyent tolleracyon  
 Of that most goodly mayd  
 That *Placebo* hath sayd,  
 And for her sparow prayd  
 In lamentable wyse,  
 Now wyll I enterpryse,  
 Thorow the grace dyuine  
 Of the Muses nyne,  
 Her beautye to commende,  
 If *Arethusa* wyll send  
 Me enfluence to endyte,  
 And with my pen to wryte ;  
 If *Apollo* wyll promyse,  
 Melodyously it to deuyse,  
 His tunable harpe stryngges  
 With armony that synges  
 Of princes and of kynges  
 And of all pleasaunt thynges,  
 Of lust and of delyght,  
 Thorow his godly myght ;  
 To whom be the laude ascrybed  
 That my pen hath enbybed

280

280

270

With the aureat droppes,  
 As verely my hope is,  
 Of Thagus, that golden fiod,  
 That passeth all erthly good ;  
 And as that fiod doth pas  
 Al floodes that euer was  
 With his golden sandes,  
 Who so that vnderstandes 800  
 Cosmography, and the stremys  
 And the floodes in straunge remes,  
 Ryght so she doth excede  
 All other of whom we rede,  
 Whose fame by me shall sprede  
 Into Perce and Mede,  
 From Brytons Albion  
 To the Towre of Babilon.

I trust it is no shame,  
 And no man wyll me blame, 800  
 Though I regester her name  
 In the courte of Fame ;  
 For this most goodly floure,  
 This blossome of fresshe coulour,  
 So Jupiter me socour,  
 She floryssheth new and new  
 In bewte and vertew ;  
*Hac claritate gemina*  
*O gloriosa fæmina,*  
*Retribue servo tuo, vivifica me !* 800  
*Labia mea laudabunt te.*

But enforsed am I



Openly to askry,  
And to make an outcri  
Against odyous Enui,  
That euermore wil ly,  
And say cursedly ;  
With his ledder ey,  
And chekes dry ;  
With vysage wan,  
As swarte as tan ;  
His bones crake,  
Leane as a rake ;  
His gummes rusty  
Are full vnlusty ;  
Hys herte withall  
Bytter as gall ;  
His lyuer, his longe  
With anger is wronge ;  
His serpentes tonge  
That many one hath stonge ;  
He frowneth euer ;  
He laugheth neuer,  
Euen nor morow,  
But other mennes sorow  
Causeth him to gryn  
And reioyce therin ;  
No slepe can him catch,  
But euer doth watch,  
He is so bete  
With malyce, and frete  
With angre and yre,  
His foule desyre

919

920

920

Wyll suffre no slepe  
 In his hed to crepe ;  
 His foule semblaunt  
 All displeasaunte ;  
 Whan other ar glad,  
 Than is he sad ;  
 Frantike and mad ;  
 His tong neuer styll  
 For to say yll,  
 Wrythyng and wringyng,  
 Bytyng and styngyng ;  
 And thus this elf  
 Consumeth himself,  
 Hymself doth slo  
 Wyth payne and wo.  
 This fals Enuy  
 Sayth that I  
 Vse great folly  
 For to endyte,  
 And for to wryte,  
 And spend my tyme  
 In prose and ryme,  
 For to expres  
 The noblenes  
 Of my maistres,  
 That causeth me  
 Studious to be  
 To make a relation  
 Of her commendation ;  
 And there agayne

Enuy doth complayne,  
And hath disdayne ;  
But yet certayne  
I wyll be playne,  
And my style dres  
To this prosses.

Now Phebus me ken 879  
To sharpe my pen,  
And lede my fyst  
As hym best lyst,  
That I may say  
Honour alway  
Of womankynd!  
Trowth doth me bynd  
And loyalte  
Euer to be 880  
Their true bedell,  
To wryte and tell  
How women excell  
In noblenes ;  
As my maistres,  
Of whom I thynk  
With pen and ynk  
For to compyle  
Some goodly style ;  
For this most goodly floure,  
This blossome of fresh coloure, 880  
So Jupyter me socoure,  
She flourissheth new and new  
In beaute and vertew :

*Hac claritate gemina  
O gloriosa fœmina,  
Legem pone mihi, domina, in viam jus-  
tificationum tuarum!  
Quemadmodum desiderat cervus ad  
fontes aquarum.*

How shall I report  
All the goodly sort  
Of her fetures clere, 1000  
That hath non ertly pere?  
Her <sup>1</sup> fauour of her face  
Ennewed all with grace,  
Confort, pleasure, and solace,  
Myne hert doth so embrace,  
And so hath rauyshed me  
Her to behold and se,  
That in wordes playne  
I cannot me refrayne  
To loke on her agayne: 1010  
Alas, what shuld I fayne?  
It wer a plesaunt payne  
With her aye to remayne.

Her eyen gray and stepe  
Causeth myne hert to lepe;  
With her browes bent  
She may well represent  
Fayre Lucres, as I wene,  
Or els fayre Polixene,

<sup>1</sup> *Her*] Qy. "The?"

Or els Caliope, 1080  
 Or els Penelope ;  
 For this most goodly floure,  
 This blossome of fresshe coloure,  
 So Jupiter me socoure,  
 She florisheth new end new  
 In beautye and vertew :  
*Hac claritate gemina*  
*O gloriosa fœmina,*  
*Memor esto verbi tui servo tuo !*  
*Servus tuus sum ego.* 1090

The Indy saphyre blew  
 Her vaynes doth ennew ;  
 The orient perle so clere,  
 The whytnesse of her lere ;  
 The <sup>1</sup> lusty ruby ruddes  
 Resemble the rose buddes ;  
 Her lyppes soft and mery  
 Emblomed lyke the chery,  
 It were an heuenly blysse  
 Her sugred mouth to kysse. 1040

Her beautye to augment,  
 Dame Nature hath her lent  
 A warte vpon her cheke,  
 Who so lyst to seke  
 In her vysage a skar,  
 That semyth from afar  
 Lyke to the radyant star,  
 All with fauour fret,

<sup>1</sup> The] Qy. "Her?"

So properly it is set :  
 She is the vyolet, 1050  
 The daysy delectable,  
 The columbine commendable,  
 The ielofer amyable ;  
 [For] <sup>1</sup> this most goodly floure,  
 This blossom of fressh colour,  
 So Jupiter me succour,  
 She florysheth new and new  
 In beaute and vertew :  
*Hac claritate gemina*  
*O gloriosa fœmina,* 1060  
*Bonitatem fecisti cum servo tuo, domina,*  
*Et ex præcordiis sonant præconia !*  
 And whan I perceyued  
 Her wart and conceyued,  
 It cannot be denayd  
 But it was well conuayd,  
 And set so womanly,  
 And nothyng wantonly,  
 But ryght conueniently,  
 And full congruently, 1070  
 As Nature cold deuyse,  
 In most goodly wyse ;  
 Who so lyst beholde,  
 It makethe louers bolde  
 To her to sewe for grace,  
 Her fauoure to purchase ;

<sup>1</sup> [For] Compare vv. 989, 1022, 1088, 1107, &c.

The sker upon her chyn,  
 Enhached on her fayre skyn,  
 Whyter than the swan,  
 It wold make any man 1080  
 To forget deadly syn  
 Her fauour to wyn ;  
 For this most goodly floure,  
 This blossom of fressh coloure,  
 So Jupiter me socoure,  
 She flouryssheth new and new  
 In beaute and vertew :  
*Hac claritate gemina*  
*O gloriosa fœmina,*  
*Defecit in salutatione tua*<sup>1</sup> *anima mea ;* 1090  
*Quid petis filio, mater dulcissima ? babæ !*<sup>2</sup>  
 Soft, and make no dyn,  
 For now I wyll begyn  
 To haue in remembraunce  
 Her goodly dalyaunce,  
 And her goodly pastaunce :  
 So sad and so demure,  
 Behauynge her so sure,  
 With wordes of pleasure  
 She wold make to the lure 1100  
 And any man conuert  
 To gyue her his hole hert.

<sup>1</sup> *salutatione tua*] Eds. "salutare tuum" and "salutate tuum."

<sup>2</sup> *babæ*] Eds. "ba ba."

She made me sore amased  
 Vpon her whan I gased,  
 Me thought min hert was crased,  
 My eyne were so dased ;  
 For this most goodly flour,  
 This blossom of fressh colour,  
 So Jupyter me socour,  
 She flouryssheth new and new 1110  
 In beauty and vertew :

*Hac claritate gemina  
 O gloriosa femina,  
 Quomodo dilexi legem tuam, domina!  
 Recedant vetera, nova sint omnia.*

And to amende her tale,  
 Whan she lyst to auale,  
 And with her fyngers smale,  
 And handes soft as sylke,  
 Whyter than the mylke, 1120  
 That are so quykely vayned,  
 Wherwyth my hand she strayned,  
 Lorde, how I was payned !  
 Vnneth I me refrayned,  
 How she me had reclaymed,  
 And me to her retayned,  
 Enbrasyng therwithall  
 Her goodly myddell small  
 With sydes longe and streyte ;  
 To tell you what conceyte 1120  
 I had than in a tryce,  
 The matter were to nyse,  
 And yet there was no vyce,



Nor yet no villany,  
 But only fantasy ;  
 For this most goodly floure,  
 This blossom of fressh coloure,  
 So Jupiter me succoure,  
 She floryssheth new and new  
 In beaute and vertew : 1160  
*Hac claritate gemina*  
*O gloriosa fœmina,*  
*Iniquos odio habui !*  
*Non calumnientur me superbi.*

But whereto shulde I note  
 How often dyd I tote  
 Vpon her prety fote ?  
 It raysed myne hert rote  
 To se her treade the grounde  
 With heles short and rounde. 1170  
 She is playnly expresse  
 Egeria, the goddesse,  
 And lyke to her image,  
 Emportured with corage,  
 A louers pylgrimage ;  
 Ther is no beest sauage,  
 Ne no tyger so wood,  
 But she wolde chaunge his mood,  
 Such relucent grace  
 Is formed in her face ; 1180  
 For this most goodly floure,  
 This blossome of fresshe coloure,  
 So Jupiter me succour,

She flouryssheth new and new  
In beaute and vertew :

*Hac claritate gemina*

*O gloriosa fœmina,*

*Mirabilia testimonia tua !*

*Sicut novellæ plantationes in juventute sua.*

So goodly as she dresses, 1170

So properly she presses

The bryght golden tresses

Of her heer so fyne,

Lyke Phebus beames shyne.

Wherto shuld I disclose

The garteryng of her hose ?

It is for to suppose

How that she can were

Gorgiously her gere ;

Her fresshe habylementes 1180

With other implementes

To serue for all ententes,

Lyke dame Flora, quene

Of lusty somer grene ;

For this most goodly floure,

This blossom of fressh coloure,

So Jupiter me socoure,

She florisheth new and new

In beautye and vertew :

*Hac claritate gemina*

1190

*O gloriosa fœmina,*

*Clamavi in toto corde, exaudi me !*

*Misericordia tua magna est super me.*

Her kyrtell so goodly lased,  
 And vnder that is brased  
 Such plasures that I may  
 Neyther wryte nor say ;  
 Yet though I wryte not with ynke,  
 No man can let me thynke,  
 For thought hath lyberte, 1200  
 Thought is franke and fre ;  
 To thynke a mery thought  
 It cost me lytell nor nought.  
 Wolde God myne homely style  
 Were pullysshed with the fyle  
 Of Ciceros eloquence,  
 To prase her excellence !  
 For this most goodly floure,  
 This blossome of fressh coloure,  
 So Jupiter me succoure, 1210  
 She flouryssheth new and new  
 In beaute and vertew :  
*Hac claritate gemina*  
*O gloriosa fæmina,*  
*Principes persecuti sunt me gratis !*  
*Omnibus consideratis,*  
*Paradisus voluptatis*  
*Hæc virgo est dulcissima.*  
 My pen it is vnable,  
 My hand it is vnstable, 1220  
 My reson rude and dull  
 To prayse her at the full ;  
 Goodly maystres Jane,  
 Sobre, demure Dyane ;

Jane this maystres hyght  
 The lode star of delyght,  
 Dame Venus of all pleasure,  
 The well of worldly treasure;  
 She doth excede and pas  
 In prudence dame Pallas;  
 [For] this most goodly floure,  
 This blossome of fresshe colour,  
 So Jupiter me socoure,  
 She floryssheth new and new  
 In beaute and vertew:

1290

*Hac claritate gemina*

*O gloriosa fœmina!*

*Requiem æternam dona eis, Domine!*

With this psalme, *Domine, probasti me,*

Shall sayle ouer the see,

1295

With *Tibi, Domine, commendamus,*

On pylgrimage to saynt Jamys,

For shrympes, and for prayns,

And for stalkynge cranys;

And where my pen hath offendyd,

I pray you it may be amendyd

By discrete consyderacyon

Of your wyse reformatyon;

I haue not offended, I trust,

If it be sadly dycust.

1300

It were no gentle gyse

This treatyse to despyse

Because I haue wrytten and sayd

Honour of this fayre mayd;

Wherefore shulde I be blamed,  
 That I Jane haue named,  
 And famously proclaimed?  
 She is worthy to be enrolde  
 With letters of golde.

*Car elle vault.*

1200

*Per me laurigerum Britonum Skeltonida vatem  
 Laudibus eximiis merito hæc redimita puella est:  
 Formosam cecini, qua non formosior ulla est;  
 Formosam potius quam commendaret Homerus.  
 Sic iuvat interdum rigidos recreare labores,  
 Nec minus hoc titulo tersa Minerva mea est.  
 Rien que playsere.*

*Thus endeth the boke of Philip Sparow, and here  
 foloweth an adicyon made by maister Skelton.*

The gyse now a dayes  
 Of some ianglynge iayes  
 Is to discommende  
 That they cannot amend,  
 Though they wold spend  
 All the wyttes they haue.

1270

What ayle them to deprauē  
 Phillip Sparowes graue?  
 His *Dirige*, her Commendacyon  
 Can be no derogacyon,  
 But myrth and consolacyon  
 Made by protestacyon,

No man to myscontent  
With Phillyppes enterement.

1290

Alas, that goodly mayd,  
Why shuld she be afrayde?  
Why shuld she take shame  
That her goodly name,  
Honorably reported,  
Sholde be set and sorted,  
To be matriculate  
With ladyes of estate?

I coniure thé, Phillip Sparow,  
By Hercules that hell dyd harow,  
And with a venemous arow  
Slew of the Epidaures  
One of the Centaures,  
Or Onocentaures,  
Or Hipocentaures;  
By whose myght and mayne  
An hart was slayne  
With hornes twayne  
Of glytteryng gold;  
And the appels of gold  
Of Hesperides withhold,  
And with a dragon kept  
That neuer more slept,  
By marcyall strength  
He wan at length;  
And slew Gerion  
With thre bodyes in one;  
With myghty corage

1290

1290

Adauntid the rage 1210  
 Of a lyon sauage ;  
 Of Dyomedes stable  
 He brought out a rable  
 Of coursers and rounses  
 With leapes and bounses ;  
 And with mighty luggyng,  
 Wrestlyng and tuggyng,  
 He plucked the bull  
 By the horned skull,  
 And offred to Cornucopia ; 1220  
 And so forth *per cetera* :  
     Also by Ecates bower  
 In Plutos gastly tower ;  
     By the vgly Eumenides,  
 That neuer haue rest nor ease ;  
     By the venomous serpent,  
 That in hell is neuer brent,  
 In Lerna the Grekes fen,  
 That was engendred then ;  
     By Chemeras flames, 1230  
 And all the dedly names  
 Of infernall posty,  
 Where soules frye and rosty ;  
     By the Stygyall flood,  
 And the streames wood  
 Of Cocitus botumles well ;  
     By the feryman of hell,  
 Caron with his beerd hore,  
 That roweth with a rude ore

And with his frownsid fore top 1340

Gydeth his bote with a prop :

I coniure Phylp, and call

In the name of kyng Saul ;

*Primo Regum* expresse,

He bad the Phitonesse

To wytchcraft her to dresse,

And by her abusyons,

And dampnable illusyons

Of marueylus conclusyons,

And by her supersticyons, 1350

And wonderfull condityons,

She raysed vp in that stede

Samuell that was dede ;

But whether it were so,

He were *idem in numero*,

The selfe same Samuell,

How be it to Saull dyd he tell

The Philistinis shuld hym ascry,

And the next day he shuld dye,

I wyll my selfe dyscharge 1360

To lettred men at large :

But, Phylp, I coniure thee

Now by these names thre,

Diana in the woodes grene,

Luna that so bryght doth shene,

Procerpina in hell,

That thou shortly tell,

And shew now vnto me

What the cause may be

Of this perplexite ! 1370



*Inferias, Philippe, tuas Scroupe*<sup>1</sup> *pulchra Joanna*  
*Instante petiit : cur nostri carminis illam*  
*Nunc pudet ? est sero ; minor est infamia vero.*

Than suche as haue disdayned  
And of this worke complayned,  
I pray God they be payned  
No worse than is contayned  
In verses two or thre  
That folowe as ye<sup>2</sup> may se.

*Luride, cur, livor, volucris pia funera damnas* 1980  
*Talia te rapiant rapiunt quæ fata volucrem !*  
*Est tamen invidia mors tibi continua.*

<sup>1</sup> *Scroupe* is to be considered here as a monosyllable; unless we read "Scrope" as two short syllables.

<sup>2</sup> *ye*] So other eds. Kele's ed. "you." C.

HERE AFTER FOLOWETH THE BOOKE CALLED

ELYNOUR RUMMYNGE.\*

THE TUNNYNG OF ELYNOUR RUMMYNG PER SKELTON  
LAUREAT.

TELL you I chyll,  
If that ye wyll  
A whyle be styll,  
Of a comely gyll  
That dwelt on a hyll:  
But she is not gryll,  
For she is somewhat sage  
And well worne in age;  
For her vysage  
It would aswage  
A mannes courage.  
Her lothely lere  
Is nothyng clere,  
But vgly of chere,  
Droupy and drowsy,  
Scuruy and lowsy;  
Her face all bowsy,

\* From the ed. by Kynge and Marche of *Certaine bokes compyled by mayster Skelton*, n. d., collated with the same work, ed. Day, n. d., and ed. Lant, n. d., with Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568, and occasionally with the comparatively modern ed. of *Elynour Rummin* by Rand, 1824.

Comely crynklyd,  
 Woundersly wrynkled,  
 Lyke a rost pygges eare, 20  
 Brystled wyth here.

Her lewde lypes twayne,  
 They slauer, men sayne,  
 Lyke a ropy rayne,  
 A gummy glayre :  
 She is vgly fayre ;  
 Her nose somdele hoked,  
 And camously croked,  
 Neuer stoppynge,  
 But euer droppynge ; 30  
 Her skynne lose and slacke,  
 Grained lyke a sacke ;  
 With a croked backe.

Her eyen gowndy  
 Are full vnsowndy,  
 For they are blered ;  
 And she gray hered ;  
 Jawed lyke a jetty ;  
 A man would haue pytty  
 To se how she is gumbed, 40  
 Fyngered and thumbed,  
 Gently ioynted,  
 Gresed and annoynted  
 Vp to the knockels ;  
 The bones [of] her huckels  
 Lyke as they were with buckles  
 Togyther made fast :  
 Her youth is farre past :

Foted lyke a plane,  
 Legged lyke a crane ; 60  
 And yet she wyll iet,  
 Lyke a iolly fet,  
 In her furred flocket,  
 And gray russet rocket,  
 With symper the cocket.  
 Her huke of Lyncole grene,  
 It had ben hers, I wene,  
 More then fourty yere ;  
 And so doth it apere,  
 For the grene bare thredes 60  
 Loke like sere wedes,  
 Wyddered lyke hay,  
 The woll worne away ;  
 And yet I dare saye  
 She thynketh herselfe gaye  
 Vpon the holy daye,  
 Whan she doth her aray,  
 And gyrdeth in her gytes  
 Styched and pranked with pletes ;  
 Her kyrtel Brystow red, 70  
 With clothes vpon her hed  
 That wey a sowe of led,  
 Wrythen in wonder wyse,  
 After the Sarasyns gyse,  
 With a whym wham,  
 Knyt with a trym tram,  
 Vpon her brayne pan,  
 Like an Egyptian,

Cupped<sup>1</sup> was she;  
 With the green and  
 Herewe be to knowe,  
 She couthen knowe the dewe  
 With a pette of lewes  
 As brude as two wifes;  
 She tokes as a gaw  
 With her blakke hose  
 Over the fawwe;  
 Her chere meryd with talow,  
 Gressed upon dyrt  
 That handeth her skyrt.

*Primus passus.*

And this conely dame,  
 I vnderstande, her name  
 Is Elynour Rummynge,  
 At home in her wonnynge;  
 And as men say  
 She dwelt<sup>2</sup> in Sothray,  
 In a certayne stede  
 Bynsye Lederhede.  
 She is a tonnysh gyb;  
 The deuyll and she be syb.  
 But to make vp my tale,  
 She breweth noppys ale,

<sup>1</sup> *Cupped*] Lant's ed. "Lapped"—rightly, perhaps.

<sup>2</sup> *dwelt*] Qy. "dwels?"

And maketh therof port sale<sup>1</sup>  
 To trauellars, to tynkers,  
 To sweters, to swynkers,  
 And all good ale drynkers,  
 That wyll nothyng spare,  
 But drynke till they stare  
 And brynge themselfe bare,  
 With, Now away the mare,  
 And let vs sley care,  
 As wyse as an hare !

110

Come who so wyll  
 To Elynour on the hyll,  
 Wyth, Fyll the cup, fyll,  
 And syt there by styll,  
 Erly and late :  
 Thyther cometh Kate,  
 Cysly, and Sare,  
 With theyr legges bare,  
 And also theyr fete  
 Hardely full vnsweate ;  
 Wyth theyr heles dagged,  
 Theyr kyrtelles all to-iagged,  
 Theyr smockes all to-ragged,  
 Wyth tytters and tatters,  
 Brynge dysshes and platters,  
 Wyth all theyr myght runnyng

120

<sup>1</sup> *port sale*] So Lant's ed. Ed. of Kynge and Marche, " pore  
*sale*." Day's ed. "poore *sale*." Marshe's ed. "poorte *sale*."  
 (Rand's ed. "pot-*sale*.") See notes.

To Elynour Rummynge,  
 To haue of her tunnynge : 120  
 She leneth them on the same,  
 And thus begynneth the game.

Some wenches come vnased,  
 Some huswyues come vnbrased,  
 Wyth theyr naked pappes,  
 That flyppes and flappes ;  
 It wygges and it<sup>1</sup> wagges,  
 Lyke tawny saffron bagges ;  
 A sorte of foule drabbes  
 All scuruy with scabbes : 140  
 Some be flybyttten,  
 Some skewed as a kyttten ;  
 Some wyth a sho clout  
 Bynde theyr heddes about ;  
 Some haue no herelace,  
 Theyr lockes about theyr face,  
 Theyr tresses vntrust,  
 All full of vnlust ;  
 Some loke strawry,  
 Some cawry mawry ; 160  
 Full vntydy tegges,  
 Lyke rotten egges.  
 Suche a lewde sorte  
 To Elynour resorte  
 From tyde to tyde :  
 Abyde, abyde,

<sup>1</sup> R . . . . it] Qy. "That . . . . that?"

And to you shall be tolde  
Howe hyr ale is solde  
To **Mawte** and to **Molde**.

*Secundus passus.*

Some haue no mony 160  
That thyder commy,  
For theyr ale to pay,  
That is a shreud aray;  
Elynour swered, Nay,  
Ye shall not beare away  
My ale for nought,  
By hym that me bought!  
With, Hey, dogge, hay,  
Haue these hogges away!  
With, Get me a staffe, 170  
The swyne eate my draffe!  
Stryke the hogges with a clubbe,  
They haue dronke vp my swyllynge tubbe!  
For, be there neuer so much prese,  
These swyne go to the hye dese,  
The sowe with her pygges;  
The bore his tayle wrygges,  
His rumpe also he frygges  
Agaynst the hye benche!  
With, Fo, ther is a stenche! 180  
Gather vp, thou wenche;  
Seest thou not what is fall?  
Take vp dyrt and all,  
And bere out of the hall:



God gyue it yll preuynge  
Clenly as yuell cheuynge !  
But let vs turne playne,  
There we lefte agayne.  
For, as yll a patch as that,  
The hennes ron in the mashfat ; 190  
For they go to roust  
Streight ouer the ale ioust,  
And donge, whan it commes,  
In the ale tunnes.  
Than Elynour taketh  
The mashe bolle, and shaketh  
The hennes donge away,  
And skommeth it into a tray  
Whereas the yeest is,  
With her maungy fystis : 200  
And somtyme she blennes  
The donge of her hennes  
And the ale together ;  
And sayeth, Gossyp, come hyther,  
This ale shal be thycker,  
And flowre the more quicker ;  
For I may tell you,  
I lerned it of a Jewe,  
Whan I began to brewe,  
And I haue founde it trew ; 210  
Drinke now whyle it is new ;  
And ye may it broke,  
It shall make you loke  
Yonger than ye be

Yeres two or thre,  
 For ye may proue it by me;  
 Beholde, she sayde, and so  
 How bryght I am of ble!  
 Ich am not cast away,  
 That can my husband say, 200  
 Whan we kys and play  
 In lust and in lykyng;  
 He calleth me his whytyng,  
 His mullyng and his mytyng,<sup>1</sup>  
 His nobbes and his conny,  
 His swetyng and his honny,  
 With, Bas, my prety bonny,  
 Thou art worth good and monny.  
 This make I my falyre sonny,  
 Til that he dreme and dronny; 220  
 For, after all our sport,  
 Than wyll he rout and snort;  
 Than swetely together we ly,  
 As two pygges in a sty.  
 To cease me someth best,  
 And of this tale to rest,  
 And for to leue this letter,  
 Because it is no better,  
 And because it is no swetter;  
 We wyll no further ryme 240  
 Of it at this tyme;

<sup>1</sup> *mytyng*] Eds. of Kyng and Marche, and of Lant, "nyt-  
 yng." Day's ed. "nittinge." Marche's ed. "nittinge." (Rand's  
 ed. "nittinge.") See notes.

But we wyll turne playne  
Where we left agayne.

*Tertius passus.*

Instede of coyne and monny,<sup>1</sup>  
Some brynge her a conny,  
And some a pot with honny,  
Some a salt, and some a spone,  
Some theyr hose, some theyr shone;  
Some ran a good trot  
With a skellet or a pot;  
Some fyll theyr pot full  
Of good Lemster woll:  
An huswyfe of trust,  
Whan she is athrust,  
Suche a webbe can spyn,  
Her thryft is full thyn.  
Some go streyght thyder,  
Be it slaty or slyder;  
They holde the hye waye,  
They care not what men say,  
Be that as be maye;

<sup>1</sup> *Instede of coyne, &c.*] In Skelton's *Workes*, 1736, the passage is thus exhibited:

"Some *instede of coine and monny*  
Will come and *brynge her a conny*  
Or else *a pot with honni*  
*Some a knife and some a spone*  
*Some brynge their hose, some ther shone.*"

Some, lothe to be espyde,  
Start in at the backe syde,  
Ouer the hedge and pale,  
And all for the good ale.

Some renne tyll they swete,  
Brynge wyth them malte or whete,  
And dame Elynour entrete  
To byrle them of the best.

Than cometh an other gest ; 270  
She swered by the rode of rest,  
Her lyppes are so drye,  
Without drynke she must dye ;  
Therefore fyll it by and by,  
And haue here a pecke of ry.

Anone cometh another,  
As drye as the other,  
And wyth her doth brynge  
Mele, salte, or other thynges,  
Her haruest gyrdle, her weddynges rynges, 280  
To pay for her scot  
As cometh to her lot.

Som bryngeth her husbandes hood,  
Because the ale is good ;  
Another brought her his cap  
To offer to the ale tap,  
Wyth flaxe and wyth towe ;  
And some brought sowre dowe ;  
Wyth, Hey, and wyth, howe,  
Syt we downe a rowe, 290  
And drynke tyll we blowe,  
And pype tyrly tyrlowe !

Some layde to pledge  
Theyr hatchet and theyr wedge,  
Theyr hekell and theyr rele,  
Theyr rocke, theyr spynnyng whele ;  
And some went so narrowe,  
They layde to pledge theyr wharrowe,  
Theyr rybskyn and theyr spyndell,  
Theyr nedell and theyr thymbell : 300  
Here was scant thryft  
Whan they made suche shyft.  
Theyr thrust was so great,  
They asked neuer for mete,  
But drynke, styll drynke,  
And let the cat wyne,  
Let vs washe our gommies  
From the drye crommes.

*Quartus passus.*

Some for very nede  
Layde downe a skeyne of threde, 310  
And some a skeyne of yarne ;  
Some brought from the barne  
Both benes and pease ;  
Small chaffer doth ease  
Sometyme, now and than :  
Another there was that ran  
With a good brasse pan ;  
Her colour was full wan ;  
She ran in all the hast  
Vnbrased and vnlast ; 320

Tawny, swart, and sallowe,  
 Lyke a cake of tallowe;  
 I swere by all hallow,  
 It was a stale to take  
 The deuyll in a brake.

And than came haltyng Jone,  
 And brought a gambone  
 Of bakon that was resty:  
 But, Lorde, as she was testy,  
 Angry as a waspy!  
 She began to yane and gaspy,  
 And bad Elynour go bet,  
 And fyll in good met;  
 It was dere that was farre fet.

380

Another brought a spycke  
 Of a bacon flycke;  
 Her tonge was verye quycke,  
 But she spake somewhat thycke:  
 Her felow did stammer and stut,  
 But she was a foule slut,  
 For her mouth fomyd  
 And her bely groned:  
 Jone sayne she had eaten a fyest;  
 By Christ, sayde she, thou lyst,  
 I haue as swete a breth  
 As thou, wyth shamfull deth!

380

Than Elynour sayde, Ye callettes,  
 I shall breake your palettes,  
 Wythout ye now cease!  
 And so was made the peace.

380

Than thyder came dronken Ales ;  
And she was full of tales,  
Of tydynges in Wales,  
And of saint James in Gales,  
And of the Portyngales ;  
Wyth, Lo, gossyp, I wys,  
Thus and thus it is,  
There hath ben great war  
Betwene Temple Bar  
And the Crosse in Chepe, 280  
And there came an hepe  
Of mylstones in a route :  
She speketh thus in her snout,  
Sneuelyng in her nose,  
As thoughe she had the pose ;  
Lo, here is an olde tyyppet,  
And ye wyll gyue me a syppet  
Of your stale ale,  
God sende you good sale !  
And as she was drynkynge, 290  
She fyll in a wynkynge  
Wyth a barlyhood,  
She pyst where she stood ;  
Than began she to wepe,  
And forthwyth fell on slepe.  
Elynour toke her vp,  
And blessed her wyth a cup  
Of newe ale in cornes ;  
Ales founde therin no thornes,  
But supped it vp at ones, 300  
She founde therin no bones.

*Quintus passus.*

Nowe in cometh another rabell;  
 Fyrst one wyth a ladell,  
 Another wyth a cradell,  
 And wyth a syde sadell:  
 And there began a fabell,  
 A clatterynge and a babell  
 Of folys fylly<sup>1</sup>  
 That had a fole wyth wylly,  
 With, last you, and, gup, gylly!  
 She coulede not lye styly.

300

Then came in a genet,  
 And sware by saynct Benet,  
 I dranke not this sennet  
 A draught to my pay;  
 Elynour, I thé pray,  
 Of thyne ale let vs assay,  
 And haue here a pylche of gray  
 I were skynnes of conny,  
 That causeth I loke so donny.

400

Another than dyd hyche her,  
 And brought a pottel pycher,  
 A tonnel, and a bottell,  
 But she had lost the stoppell;  
 She cut of her sho sole,  
 And stopped therwyth the hole  
 Amonge all the blommer,  
 Another brought a skommer,

<sup>1</sup> *fylly*] Marsha's ed. "silly."



A fryinge pan, and a slyce ;  
Elynour made the pryce  
For good ale eche whyt.

410

Than sterte in mad Kyt,  
That had lyttle wyt ;  
She semed somdele seke,  
And brought a peny cheke  
To dame Elynour,  
For a draught of lycour.

Than Margery Mylkeducke  
Her kyrtell she did vptucke  
An ynche aboue her kne,  
Her legges that ye myght se ;  
But they were sturdy and stubbed,  
Myghty pestels and clubbed,  
As fayre and as whyte  
As the fote of a kyte :  
She was somewhat foule,  
Crokenecked lyke an oule ;  
And yet she brought her fees,  
A cantell of Essex chese  
Was well a fote thycke,  
Full of maggottes quycke ;  
It was huge and greate,  
And myghty stronge meate  
For the deuyll to eate ;  
It was tart and punyete.

420

430

Another sorte of sluttas,  
Some brought walnuttes,  
Some apples, some peres,  
Some brought theyr clyppynge sheres,

Some brought this and that, 140  
 Some brought I wote nere what,  
 Some brought theyr husbandes hat,  
 Some podynges and lynkes,  
 Some trypes that stynkes.

But of all this thronge  
 One came them amonge,  
 She semed halfe a leche,  
 And began to preche  
 Of the tewsdai in the weke  
 Whan the mare doth keke; 145  
 Of the vertue of an vnset leke;  
 Of her husbandes breke;  
 Wyth the feders of a quale  
 She could to Burdeou sayle;  
 And wyth good ale barme  
 She could make a charme  
 To helpe wythall a stytych.  
 She semed to be a wytch.

Another brought two goslynges,  
 That were noughty froslynges; 150  
 She brought them in a wallet,  
 She was a cumly callet:  
 The goalenges were untyde;  
 Elynour began to chyde,  
 They be wretchockes thou hast brought,  
 They are shyre shakyng nought!

*Sextus passus.*

Maude Ruggy thyther skyped:  
 She was vgly hypped,

And vgly thycke lypped,  
 Lyke an onyon syded, 670  
 Lyke tan ledder hyded :  
 She had her so guyded  
 Betwene the cup and the wall,  
 That she was there wythall  
 Into a palsey fall ;  
 Wyth that her hed shaked,  
 And her handes quaked :  
 Ones hed wold haue aked  
 To se her naked :  
 She dranke so of the dregges, 680  
 The dropsy was in her legges ;  
 Her face glystryng lyke glas ;  
 All foggy fat she was ;  
 She had also the gout  
 In all her ioyntes about ;  
 Her breth was soure and stale,  
 And smelled all of ale :  
 Suche a bedfellow  
 Wold make one cast his crow ;  
 But yet for all that 690  
 She dranke on the mash fat.

There came an old rybybe ;  
 She halted of a kybe,  
 And had broken her shyn  
 At the threshold comyng in,  
 And fell so wyde open  
 That one myght se her token,  
 The deuyll thereon be wroken !  
 What nede all this be spoken ?

She yelled lyke a calfe : 500  
 Ryse vp, on Gods halfe,  
 Said Elynour Rummyng,  
 I beshrew thé for thy cummyng !  
 And as she at her did pluck,  
 Quake, quake, sayd the duck  
 In that lampatrams lap ;  
 Wyth, Fy, couer thy shap  
 Wyth sum flyp flap !  
 God gyue it yll hap,  
 Sayde Elynour for shame, 510  
 Lyke an honest dame.  
 Vp she stert, halfe lame,  
 And skantly could go  
 For payne and for wo.

In came another dant,  
 Wyth a gose and a gant :  
 She had a wide wesant ;  
 She was nothyng pleasant ;  
 Necked lyke an olyfant ;  
 It was a bullyfant, 520  
 A gredy cormerant.

Another brought her garlyke hedes ;  
 Another brought her bedes  
 Of iet or of cole,  
 To offer to the ale pole :  
 Some brought a wymble,  
 Some brought a thymble,  
 Some brought a sylke lace,  
 Some brought a pyncase,

Some her husbandes gowne, 530  
 Some a pyllow of downe,  
 Some of<sup>1</sup> the napery;  
 And all this shyfte they make  
 For the good ale sake.

A strawe, sayde Bele, stande vtter,  
 For we haue egges and butter,  
 And of<sup>2</sup> pygeons a payre.

Than sterte forth a fysgygge,  
 And she brought a bore pygge;  
 The fleshe therof was ranke, 540  
 And her brethe strongly stanke,  
 Yet, or she went, she dranke,  
 And gat her great thanke  
 Of Elynour for her ware,  
 That she thyther bare  
 To pay for her share.  
 Now truly, to my thynkyng,  
 This is a solempne drinkyng.

*Septimus passus.*

Soft, quod one, hyght Sybbyll,  
 And let me wyth you bybyll. 550  
 She sat downe in the place,  
 With a sory face  
 Wheywormed about;

<sup>1</sup> *Some of, &c.*] The line which rhymed with this has dropt out.

<sup>2</sup> *And of, &c.*] The line which rhymed with this has dropt out.

Garnyshed was her snout  
 Wyth here and there a puscull,  
 Lyke a scabbyd muscull.  
 This ale, sayde she, is noppý ;  
 Let vs syppe and soppý,  
 And not spyll a droppý,  
 For so mote I hoppy,  
 It coleth well my croppý.

560

Dame Elynoure, sayde she,  
 Hauē here is for me,  
 A cloute of London pynnes ;  
 And wyth that she begynnes  
 The pot to her plucke,  
 And dranke a good lucke ;  
 She swynged vp a quarte  
 At ones for her parte ;  
 Her paunche was so puffed,  
 And so wyth ale stuffed,  
 Had she not hyed apace,  
 She had defoyled the place.

570

Than began the sporte  
 Amonge that dronken sorte :  
 Dame Eleynour, sayde they,  
 Lende here a cocke of hey,  
 To make all thyng cleane ;  
 Ye wote well what we meane.

580

But, syr, among all  
 That sat in that hall,  
 There was a pryckemedenty,  
 Sat lyke a seynty,

And began to paynty,  
As thoughe she would faynty ;  
She made it as koy  
As a lege de moy ;  
She was not halfe so wyse  
As she was peuysshe nyse. 800  
She sayde neuer a worde,  
But rose from the borde,  
And called for our dame,  
Elynour by name.  
We supposed, I wys,  
That she rose to pys ;  
But the very grounde  
Was for to compounde  
Wyth Elynour in the spence,  
To pay for her expence :  
I haue no penny nor grote 810  
To pay, sayde she, God wote,  
For washyng of my throte ;  
But my bedes of amber  
Bere them to your chamber.  
Then Elynour dyd them hyde  
Wythin her beddes syde.  
But some than sat ryght sad  
That nothyng had  
There of theyr awne,  
Neyther gelt nor pawne ; 815  
Suche were there menny  
That had not a penny,  
But, whan they should walke,

Were fayne wyth a chalke  
 To score on the balke,  
 Or score on the tayle :  
 God gyue it yll hayle !  
 For my fyngers ytche ;  
 I haue wrytten to mytche  
 Of this mad mummynge  
 Of Elynour Rummynge.  
 Thus endeth the gest  
 Of this worthy fest.

630

Quod Skelton, Laureat.

LAUREATI SKELTONIDIS IN DESPECTU MALIGNANTIUM  
 DISTICHON.

*Quamvis insanis, quamvis marcescis inanis,  
 Invide, cantamus ; hæc loca plena jocis.  
 Bien men souuient.*

*Omnes fœminas, quæ vel nimis bibulæ sunt, vel  
 quæ sordida labe squaloris, aut qua spurca fœdi-  
 tatis macula, aut verbosa loquacitate notantur, poeta  
 invitat ad audiendum hunc libellum, &c.*

*Ebria, squalida, sordida fœmina, prodiga verbis,  
 Huc currat, properet, veniat ! Sua gesta libellus  
 Iste volutabit : Pæan sua plectra sonando  
 Materiam risus cantabit carmine rauco.*

*Finis.*

Quod Skelton, Laureat.



## POEMS AGAINST GARNESCHE.\*

SKELTON LAURIA TE DEFEND[ER] AGENST M[ASTER]  
GARNESCHE CHALLENGER, ET CETERA.

SITHE ye haue me chalyngyd, M[aster] Garnesche,  
Ruduly revilyng me in the kynges noble hall,  
Soche an odyr chalyngyr cowde me no man wysch,<sup>1</sup>  
But yf yt war Syr Tyrmagant that tyrnyd with  
out nall;<sup>2</sup>  
For Syr Frollo de Franko was neuer halfe so  
talle.  
But sey me now, Syr Satrapas, what autoryte ye  
haue  
In your chalenge, Syr Chystyn, to cale me knaue ?  
  
What, haue ye kythyd yow a knyght, Syr Dugles  
the dowty,  
So currysly to beknaue me in the kynges place ?<sup>3</sup>

\* These Poems against Garnesche (now for the first time printed) are from a MS. in the Harleian Collection, 387 (fol. 101), which is in many parts scarcely legible, being written in a hand very difficult to decipher, as well as being much injured by damp.

<sup>1</sup> *wysch*] So MS. seems to read.

<sup>2</sup> *with out nall*] Seems to be the reading of MS.,—"nall" having been added, instead of "alle," which is drawn through with the pen.

<sup>3</sup> *place*] Might be read perhaps "palace."

Ye stronge sturdy stalyon, so sterne and stowty, <sup>10</sup>  
 Ye bere yow bolde as Barabas, or Syr Terry  
 of Trace;  
 Ye gyrne grymly with your gomys and with  
 your grysly face.  
 But sey me yet, Syr Satropas, what auctoryte ye  
 haue  
 In your chalange, Syr Chesten, to calle me a  
 knaue?

Ye fowle, fers, and felle, as Syr Ferumbras the  
 ffreke,  
 Syr capten of Catywade, catacumbas of Cayre,  
 Thow ye be lusty as Syr Lybyus launces to  
 breke,  
 Yet your contenons oncomly, your face ys nat  
 fayer:  
 For alle your proude prankyng, your pride may  
 apayere.  
 But sey me yet, Syr Satrapas, wat auctoryte ye  
 haue <sup>20</sup>  
 In your chalenge, Syr Chesten, to cal me a knaue?

Of Mantryble the Bryge, Malchus the murryon,  
 Nor blake Baltazar with hys basnet routh as a  
 bere,  
 Nor Lycon, that lothly luske, in myn opynyon,  
 Nor no bore so brymly brystlyd ys with here,  
 As ye ar brystlyd on the bake for alle your  
 gay gere.

[But sey me yet, Syr Satrapas, what auctoryte  
ye haue  
In your chalenge, Syr Chesten, to calle me a  
knaue?]

Your wynde schakyn shankkes, your longe lothy  
legges,  
Crockyd as a camoke, and as a kowe calves,    ■  
Bryngges yow out of fauyr with alle femall teggys :  
That mastres Punt put yow of, yt was nat alle  
causeles ;  
At Orwelle hyr hauyn your anggre was laules.  
[But sey me yet, Syr Satrapas, what auctoryte  
ye haue  
In your chalenge, Syr Chesten, to calle me a  
knaue?]

I sey, ye solem Sarson, alle blake ys your ble ;  
As a glede glowynge, your ien glyster as glasse,  
Rowlynge in yower holow hede, vgly to see ;    ■  
Your tethe teintyd with tawny ; your semely  
snowte doth passe,  
Howkyd as an hawkys beke, lyke Syr Topyas.  
Boldly bend you to batell, and buske your selfe  
to saue :  
Chalenge your selfe for a fole, call me no more  
knaue.

Be the kynges most noble commandement.

SKELTON LAURYATE DEFENDER AGENST M[ASTER] GAR-  
NESCHE CHALANGAR, WITH GRESTY, GORBELYD  
GODFREY [ET] CETERA.

How may I your mokerie mekely tollerate,  
[Your]<sup>1</sup> gronynge, your grontynge, your groin-  
ynge lyke a swyne?  
[Your] pride ys alle to peuiche, your porte im-  
portunate;  
[You] mantycore,<sup>2</sup> ye maltaperte, ye can bothe  
wins and whyne;  
[Your] lothesum lere to loke on, lyke a gresyd  
bote dothe schyne.  
Ye cappyd Cayface copious, your paltoke on your  
pate,  
Thow ye prate lyke prowde Pylate, be ware yet  
of chek mate.

Hole ys your brow that ye brake with Deu[ra]n-  
dall your awne sworde;  
Why holde ye on yer cap, syr, then? your  
pardone ys expyryd:  
Ye hobble very homly before the kynges borde; 10

<sup>1</sup> *Your*] The beginning of this line, and of the next three lines, torn off in MS.

<sup>2</sup> *mantycore*] MS. "mantyca."

Ye countyr vmwhyle to capcyously, and ar ye  
be dysiryd ;

Your moth etyn mokkysh maneres, they be all  
to myryd.

Ye cappyd Cayface copyous, your paltoke on your  
pate,

Thow ye prate lyke prowde Pylate, be ware of  
cheke mate.

O Gabionyte of Gabyone, why do ye gane and  
gaspe ?

Huf a galante Garnesche, loke on your comly  
cors !

Lusty Garnysche, lyke a lowse, ye jet full lyke a  
jaspe ;

As wytyles as a wylde goos, ye haue but small  
remorrs

Me for to chalenge that of your chalennge  
makyth so lytyll fors.

Ye capyd Cayfas copyous, your paltoke on your  
pate, 20

Tho ye prate lyke prowde Pylate, be ware of  
cheke mate.

Syr Gy, Syr Gawen, Syr Cayus, for and Syr  
Olyuere,

Pyramus, nor Priamus, nor Syr Pyrrus the  
prowde,

In Arturys auneyent actys no where ys prouyd  
your pere ;

The facyoun of your fysnamy the devyl in a  
clowde ;

Your harte ys to hawte, I wys, yt wyll nat be  
alowde.

Ye capyd Cayfas copyus, your paltoke on your  
pate,

Thow ye prate lyke prowde Pylate, be ware of  
cheke mate.

Ye grounde yow vpon Godfrey, that grysly gar-  
gons face,

Your stondearde, Syr Olifranke, agenst me for  
to splay :

Baile, baile at yow bothe, frantyke folys ! follow  
on the chase !

Cum Garnyche, cum Godfrey, with as many as  
ye may !

I advyse yow be ware of thys war, ranngge yow  
in aray.

Ye cappyd Cayfas copyous, [your paltoke on  
your pate,

Thow ye prate lyke prowde Pylate, be ware of  
cheke mate.]

Gup, gorbellyd Godfrey, gup, Garnysche, gaudy  
fole !

To turney or to tante with me ye ar to fare to  
seke :

For thes twayne whypslouens calle for a coke  
stole :

Thow mantycore, ye marmoset, garnyshte lyke  
a Greke,  
Wranglynge, waywyrde, wytles, wraw, and  
nothyng meke. 40  
Ye cappyd [Cayfas copyous, your paltoke on your  
pate,  
Thow ye prate lyke prowde Pylate, be ware of  
cheke mate.]  
*Mirres vous y,*  
Loke nat to hy.  
By the kynges most noble commaundment.

SKELTON LAWRYATE DEFENDER AGENTYST LUSTY GARNYCHE  
 WELLE BE SEYN CRYSTEOWYR CHALANNGER, ET  
 CETERA.

I HAUE your lewde letter receyuyd,  
 And well I haue yt perseyuyd,  
 And your skrybe I haue aspyed,  
 That your mad mynde contruyuyd.  
 Sauynge your vsscheres rod,  
 I caste me nat to be od  
 With neythyr of yow tewyne :  
 Wherfore I wryght ageyne ;  
 How the fauyr of your face  
 Is voyd of all good grace ;  
 For alle your carpet cousshons,  
 Ye haue knauyche condycyonns.  
 Gup, marmeset, jast ye, morelle !  
 I am laureat, I am no lorelle.  
 Lewdely your tyme ye spende,  
 My lyuyng to reprehende ;<sup>1</sup>  
 And wyll neuer intende  
 Your awne lewdnes to amende :  
 Your Englyshe lew[d]ly ye sorte,  
 And falsly 3e me reporte.  
 Garnyche, ye gape to wyde :

10

20

<sup>1</sup> *My lyuyng to reprehende*] Added to MS. in a different hand.



Yower knavery I wyll nat hyde,  
For to aswage your pride.

Whan ye war yonger of age,  
Ye war a kechyn page,  
A dyshwasher, a dryvyll,  
In the pott your nose dedde sneuyll ;  
Ye fryed and ye broylyd,  
Ye rostyd and ye boylyd,  
Ye rostyd, lyke a fonne,  
A gose with the fete vponne ;  
Ye slvfferd <sup>1</sup> vp sowse  
In my lady Brewsys howse.  
Wherto xulde I wryght  
Of soche a gresy knyght ?  
A bawdy dyscheclowte,  
That bryngyth the worlde abowte  
With haftyng and with polleyng,  
With lyenge and controlleyng.

At Gynys when ye ware  
But a slendyr spere,  
Dekkyd lewdly in your gere ;  
For when ye dwelt there,  
Ye had a knauysche cote  
Was skantly worthe a grote ;  
In dud frese ye war schrynyd,  
With better frese lynyd ;  
The oute syde euery day,  
Ye myght no better a way ;

<sup>1</sup> *slvfferd*] Might perhaps be read "slooferd"

The insyde ye ded calle 80  
 Your best gowne festyvalle.  
 Your drapry 3e ded wante,  
 The warde with yow was skante.  
 When ye kyst a shepys ie,  
 . . . <sup>1</sup> mastres Andelby,  
 . . . Gynys vpon a gonge,  
 . . . sat sumwhat to longe ;  
 . . . hyr husbandes hed,  
 . . . malle of lede,  
 . . . that ye ther prechyd, 85  
 To hyr loue ye nowte rechyd :  
 Ye wolde haue bassyd hyr bumme,  
 So that sche wolde haue kum  
 On to your lowsy den ;  
 But sche of all men  
 Had yow most in despyght,  
 Ye loste hyr fauyr quyt ;  
 Your pyllyd garleke hed  
 Cowde hocupy there no stede ;  
 She callyd yow Syr Gy of Gaunt, 90  
 Nosyd lyke an olyfaunt,  
 A pykes or a twybyll ;  
 Sche seyde how ye ded brydell,  
 Moche lyke a dromadary ;  
 Thus with yow sche ded wary,  
 With moche mater more  
 That I kepe in store.

<sup>1</sup> A portion of MS. torn off here.

Your brethe ys stronge and quike ;  
Ye ar an eldyr steke ;  
Ye wot what I thynke ;  
At bothe endes ye stynke ;  
Gret daunger for the kynge,  
Whan hys grace ys fastyng,  
Hys presens to aproche :  
Yt ys to your reproche.  
Yt fallyth for no swyne  
Nor sowtters to drynke wyne,  
Nor seche a nody polle  
A pryste for to controlle.

88

Lytyll wyt in your scrybys nolle  
That scrybblyd your fonde scrolle,  
Vpon hym for to take  
Agennst me for to make,  
Lyke a doctor dawpate,  
A lauryate poyete for to rate.  
Yower termys ar to grose,  
To far from the porpose,  
To contaminate  
And to violate  
The dygnyte lauryate.

89

100

Bolde bayarde, ye are to blynde,  
And grow all oute of kynde,  
To occupy so your mynde ;  
For reson can I non fynde  
Nor good ryme in yower mater ;  
I wondyr that ye smatyr,  
So for a knaue to clatyr ;

Ye wolde be callyd a maker,  
 And make moche lyke Jake Rakar ;  
 Ye ar a comly crakar, 110  
 Ye lernyd of sum py bakar.  
 Caste vp your curyows wrytyng,  
 And your dyrtly endytyng,  
 And your spyghtfull despyghtyng,  
 For alle ys nat worthe a myteyng,  
 A makerell nor a wyteyng :  
 Had ye gonne with me to scole,  
 And occupyed no better your tole,  
 Ye xulde haue kowththyd me a fole.

But now, gawdy, gresy Garnesche, 120  
 Your face I wyse to varnyshe  
 So suerly yt xall nat tarnishe.  
 Thow a Sarsens hed ye bere,  
 Row and full of lowsy here,  
 As heuery man wele seethe,  
 Ful of grett knauys tethe,  
 In a felde of grene peson  
 Ys ryme yet owte of reson ;  
 Your wyt ys so geson,  
 Ye rayle all out of seson. 120

Your <sup>1</sup> skyn scabbyd and scuruy,  
 Tawny, tannyd, and shuruy,  
 Now vpon thys hete  
 Rankely whan ye swete,  
 Men sey ye wyll wax lowsy,  
 Drunkyn, drowpy, drowsy.

<sup>1</sup> *Your*] Added to MS. in a different hand.

Your sworde ye swere, I wene,  
 So tranchaunt and so kene,  
 Xall kyt both wyght and grene :  
 Your foly ys to grett 140  
 The kynges colours to threte.  
 Your brethe yt ys so felle  
 And so puauntely dothe smelle,  
 And so haynnously doth stynke,  
 That naythyr pump nor synke  
 Dothe sauyr halfe so souer  
 Ageynst a stormy shouer.  
 O ladis of bryght colour,  
 Of bewte that beryth the flower,  
 When Garnyche cummyth yow amonge 150  
 With hys brethe so stronge,  
 Withowte ye haue a confectioun  
 Agenst hys poysond infeccioun,  
 Els with hys stynkyng jawys  
 He wyl cause yow caste your crawes,  
 And make youer stomoke seke  
 Ovyr the perke to pryk.

Now, Garnyche, garde thy gummys ;  
 My serpentins and my gunnys  
 Agenst ye now I bynde ; 160  
 Thy selfe therfore defende.  
 Thou tode, thou scorpione,  
 Thow bawdy babyone,  
 Thow bere, thou brystlyd bore,  
 Thou Moryshe mantycore,  
 Thou rammysche stynkyng gote,

Thou fowle chorlyshe parote,  
 Thou gresly gargone glaymy,  
 Thou swety slouen seymy,  
 Thou murrionn, thow mawment, 170  
 Thou fals stynkyng serpent,  
 Thou mokyshy marmoset,  
 I wyll nat dy in they<sup>1</sup> det.  
 Tyburne thou me assynyd,  
 Where thou xulddst haue bene shrynyd ;  
 The nexte halter ther xall be  
 I bequeth yt hole to thé :  
 Soche pelfry thou hast pachchyd,  
 And so thy selfe houyr wachyd  
 That ther thou xuldyst be rachchyd, 180  
 If thow war metely machchyd.

Ye may wele be bedawyd,  
 Ye ar a fole owtelauid ;  
 And for to telle the gronde,  
 Pay Stokys hys fyue pownd.  
 I say, Syr Dalyrag,  
 Ye bere yow bold and brag  
 With othyr menys charge :  
 Ye kyt your clothe to large :  
 Soche pollyng paiaunttis ye pley, 190  
 To poynt yow fresche and gay.

And he that scryblyd your scrolles,  
 I rekyn yow in my rowllys,  
 For ij dronken sowllys.

<sup>1</sup> they] Compare v. 18 of the next poem.

Bede and lerne ye may,  
 How olde proverbys say,  
 That byrd ys nat honest  
 That flythe hys owne nest.  
 Yf he wyst what sum wotte,  
 The flesche bastyng of his cote      200  
 Was sowyd with slendyr thre[de]:  
 God sende you wele good spede,  
 With *Dominus vobiscum*!  
 Good Latyn for Jake a thrum,  
 Tyll more matyr may cum.

By the kynges most noble commaundment.

---

DONUM LAUREATI DISTICHON CONTRA GOLIARDUM  
 GARNISHE ET HORIBAM EJUS.

*Th, Garnishe, futuus, fatuus tuus est mage scriba:*  
*Qui sapuit puer, insauit vir, versus in hydram.*

---

SKELTON LAUREATE DEFENDAR AGAINST LUSTY GARNYSHE  
 WELL BESEEN CRYSTOFER CHALANGAR, ET CETERA.

GARNYSHE, gargone, gastly, gryme,  
 I haue receuyd your secunde ryme.  
 Thowthe ye kan skylle of large and longe,  
 Ye syng allway the kukkowe songe:

Ye rayle, ye ryme, with Hay, dog, hay !  
 Your chorlyshe chaunting ys all o lay.  
 Ye, syr, rayle all in deformite :  
 Ye haue nat red the properte  
 Of naturys workys, how they be  
 Myxte with sum incommodite,  
 As prouithe well, in hys Rethorikys olde,\*  
 Cicero with hys tong of golde.  
 That nature wrowght in yow and me,  
 Irreuocable ys hyr decre ;  
 Waywardly wrowght she hath in thé,  
 Beholde thi selfe, and thou mayst se ;  
 Thow xalte beholde no wher a warse,  
 They myrrour may be the deuyllys ars.  
 Wyth, knaue, syr knaue, and knaue ageine !  
 To cal me knaue thou takyst gret payne :     20  
 The prowdest knaue yet of vs tewyne  
 Within thy skyn he xall remayne ;  
 The starkest knaue, and lest good kan,  
 Thou art callyd of euery man ;  
 The corte, the contre, wylage, and towne,  
 Sayth from thy to vnto thi croune,  
 Of all prowde knauys thow beryst the belle,  
 Lothsum as Lucifer lowest in helle.  
 On that syde, on thys syde thou dost gasy,  
 Thou thynkyst thy selfe Syr Pers de Brasy,     25

\* *Observa prologum libri 2<sup>i</sup> in veteri Rhetorica Ciceronis.*  
*Incipit autem sc. g. Crotoniati quondam cum florerent omnibus copiis, et cetera. [Side Note.]*



'Thy caytyvys carkes cours and crasy ;  
Moche of thy maneres I can blasy.

Of Lumbardy Gorge Hardyson,  
Thow wolde haue scoryd hys habarion ;  
That jentyll Jorge the Januay,  
Ye wolde haue trysyd hys trowle away :  
Soche paiantes with your fryndes ye play,  
With trechery ye them betray.  
Garnyshe, ye gate of Gorge with gaudry  
Crimsin velvet for your bawdry.  
Ye haue a fantasy to Fanchyrche strete,  
With Lumbardes lemmanns for to mete,  
With, Bas me, buttyng, praty Cys !  
Yower lothesum lypps loue well to kyse,  
Slaueryng lyke a slymy snayle ;  
I wolde ye had kyst hyr on the tayle !

Also nat fare from Bowgy row,  
Ye pressyd pertely to pluk a crow :  
Ye lost your holde, onbende your bow,  
Ye wan nothyng there but a mow ;  
Ye wan nothyng there but a skorne ;  
Sche wolde nat of yt thow had sworne  
Sche seyde ye war coluryd with cole dust ;  
To daly with yow she had no lust.  
Sche seyde your brethe stanke lyke a broke ;  
With, Gup, Syr Gy, ye gate a moke.  
Sche sware with hyr ye xulde nat dele,  
For ye war smery, lyke a sele,  
And ye war herey, lyke a calfe ;  
Sche praiid yow walke, on Goddes halfe !

And thus there ye lost yower pray ;  
 Get ye anothyr where ye may.  
 Dysparage ye myn auncetry ?  
 Ye ar dysposyd for to ly :  
 I sey, thow felle and fowle flessch fly,  
 In thys debate I thé askry.  
 Thow claimist thé jentyll, thou art a curre ;  
 Haroldis they know thy cote armur :  
 Thow thou be a jantyll man borne,  
 Yet jentylnes in thé ys thred bare worne ;  
 Haroldes from honor may thé devors,  
 For harlottes hawnte thyn hatefull cors :  
 Ye bere out brothells lyke a bawde ;  
 Ye get therby a slendyr laude  
 Betweyn the tappett and the walle,—  
 Fusty bawdyas ! I sey nat alle.  
 Of harlottes to vse soche an harres,  
 Yt bredth mothys in clothe of Arres.

What eylythe thé, rebawde, on me to raue ?  
 A kyng to me myn habyte gaue :  
 At Oxforth, the vniversyte,  
 Anaunsid I was to that degre ;  
 By hole consent of theyr senate,  
 I was made poete lawreate.  
 To cal me lorell ye ar to lewde :  
 Lythe and lystyn, all bechrewe !  
 Of the Musys nyne, Calliope  
 Hath pointyd me to rayle on thé.  
 It semyth nat thy pylyd pate  
 Agenst a poyet lawreat

To take vpon thé for to seryue:  
 It enmys thé better for to dryue  
 A dong cart or a tomrelle  
 Than with my poems for to melle.  
 The honor of England I lernyd to spelle,  
 In dygnyte roialle that doth excelle:  
 Note and marke wyl<sup>1</sup> thys parcele;  
 I yane hym drynke of the sugryd welle  
 Of Elicons waters crystallyne,  
 Acquaintyng hym with the Musys nyne. 100  
 Yt commyth thé wele me to remorde,  
 That creaunaer was to thy adre[yn]e] lorde:  
 It pleyth that noble prince roialle  
 Me as hys maaster for to calle  
 In hys lernyng primordialle.  
 Ausunt, rybawde,<sup>2</sup> thi tung reclame!  
 Me to beknaue thou art to blame;  
 Thy tong vntawte, with poyson infecte,  
 Withowte thou leue thou shalt be chekt,<sup>3</sup>  
 And takyn vp in such a frame, 110  
 That all the warlde wyll spyce your shame.  
 Ausunt, ausunt, thou slogysh . . .  
 And sey poetis no dys . . .  
 It ys for no bawdy knaue  
 The dignite lawreat for to haue.

<sup>1</sup> wyl] (Compare v. 185.

<sup>2</sup> rybawde] MS. seems to have "rylowde."

<sup>3</sup> Withowte thou leue, &c.] In MS. the latter part of this line, and the concluding portions of the next two lines, are so injured by stains that I can only guess at the words. The endings of the third and fourth lines after this are illegible.

Thow callyst me scallyd, thou callyst me mad:  
 Thow thou be pyllyd, thow ar nat sade.  
 Thow ar frantyke and lakkyst wyt,  
 To rayle with me that thé can hyt.  
 Thowth it be now ful tyde with thé, 128  
 Yet ther may falle soche caswelte,  
 Er thow be ware, that in a throw  
 Thow mayst fale downe and ebbe full lowe:  
 Wherefore in welthe beware of woo,  
 For welthe wyll sone departe thé froo.  
 To know thy selfe yf thow lake grace,  
 Lerne or be lewde, I shrow thy face.

Thow seyst I callyd thé a pecok:  
 Thow liist, I callyd thé a wodcoke;  
 For thow hast a long snowte, 129  
 A semly nose and a stowte,  
 Prickyd lyke an vnicorne:  
 I wold sum manys bake ink horne  
 Wher thi nose spectacle case;  
 Yt wold garnyche wyll thy face.

Thow demyst my raylyng ouyrthwarthe;  
 I rayle to thé soche as thow art.  
 If thow war aquentyd with alle  
 The famous poettes saturicall,  
 As Percius and Iuynall, 130  
 Horace and noble Marciall,  
 If they wer lyueyng thys day,  
 Of thé wote I what they wolde say;  
 They wolde thé wryght, all with one steuyn,  
 The follest slouen ondyr heuen,

Prowde, peuiche, lyddyr, and lewde,  
 Malapert, medyllar, nothyng well thewde,  
 Besy, braynles, to bralle and brage,  
 Wytles, wayward, Syr Wryg wrag,  
 Dysdaynous, dowble, ful of dyseyte,  
 Liing, spyng by suttelte and slyght,  
 Fleriing, flatyryng, fals, and fykkelle,  
 Scornefull and mokkyng ouer to mykkylle.

150

My tyme, I trow, I xulde but lese  
 To wryght to thé of tragedyese,  
 It ys nat mete for soche a knaue ;  
 But now my proces for to saue,  
 I have red, and rede I xall,  
 Inordynate pride wyll haue a falle.  
 Presumptuous pride ys all thyn hope :  
 God garde thé, Garnyche, from the rope !  
 Stop a tyd, and be welle ware  
 Yo be nat cawte in an hempen snare.  
 Harkyn herto, ye Haruy Haftar,  
 Pride gothe before and schame commyth after.

160

Thow wrythtyst I xulde let thé go pley :  
 Go pley thé, Garnyshe, garnysshyd gay ;  
 I care nat what thow wryght or sey ;  
 I cannat let thé the knaue to play,  
 To dauns the hay or rune the ray :  
 Thy fonde face can me nat fray.  
 Take thys for that, bere thys in mynde,  
 Of thy lewdenes more ys behynde ;  
 A reme of papyr wyll nat holde  
 Of thi lewdenes that may be tolde.

170

My study myght be better spynt ;  
But for to serue the kynges entent,  
Hys noble pleasure and commandemennt,  
Scrybbyl thow, scrybyll thow, rayle or wryght,  
Wryght what thow wylte, I xall thé aquyte. 188

By the kyngys most noble commandemennt.

SKELTON LAVREATE,

ORATORIS REGIS TERTIUS,<sup>1</sup>

AGAINST VENEMOUS TONGUES ENPOISONED WITH SCLAUNDER  
AND FALSE DETRACTIONS, &c.\*

*Quid detur tibi, aut quid apponatur tibi ad linguam dolosam?* Psalm. c. xlij.

*Deus destruet te in finem; euellet te, et emigrabit te de tabernaculo tuo, et radicem tuam de terra viventium.* Psal. lxxvii.

Al maters wel pondred and wel to be regarded,  
How shuld a fals lying tung then be rewarded?  
Such tungen shuld be torne out by the harde  
rootes,

Hoyning like hogges that groynis and wrotes.

*Dilexisti omnia verba præcipitationis, lingua dolosa.* Ubi s. &c.

For, as I haue rede in volumes olde,  
A fals lying tunge is harde to withholde;  
A sclaunderous tunge, a tunge of a skolde,  
Worketh more mischief than can be tolde;

<sup>1</sup> *Tertius*] A misprint: qv. "Versus?"

\* From Marsh's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568.

That, if I wist not to be controlde,  
Yet somewhat to say I dare well be bolde,  
How some delite for to lye thycke and threfolde.

*Ad sannam hominem redigit comice et graphice.*

For ye said, that he said, that I said, wote ye  
what?

I made, he said, a windmil of an olde mat:  
If there be none other mater but that,  
Than ye may commaunde me to gentil Cok wat.

*Hic notat purpuraria arte intextas literas Romanas  
in amictibus post ambulonum<sup>1</sup> ante et retro.*

For before on your brest, and behind on your  
back,

In Romaine letters I neuer founde lack;  
In your crosse rowe nor Christ crosse you spede,  
Your Pater noster, your Aue, nor your Crede.  
Who soeuer that tale vnto you tolde,  
He saith vntruly, to say that I would  
Controlle the cognisaunce of noble men  
Either by language or with my pen.

*Pædagogium meum de sublimiori Minerva con-  
stat esse: ergo, &c.*

My scole is more solem and somewhat more haute  
Than to be founde in any such faute.

<sup>1</sup> *post ambulonum*] The Rev. J. Mitford would read "*ambulonum post*:" *post* is probably an abridgment of *positas*.  
*Gent. Mag.* Sept. 1844, p. 244.



*Pædagogium merum male sanos maledicos sibilis  
complosisque manibus explodit, &c.*

My scoles are not for vnthriftes vntaught,  
For frantick faitours half mad and half straught;  
But my learning is of an other degree  
To taunt them like liddrous, lewde as thei bee.

*Laxent ergo antennam elationis suæ inflatam  
vento vanitatis. li. ille, &c.*

For though some be lidder, and list for to rayle,  
Yet to lie vpon me they can not preuayle:  
Then let them vale a bonet of their proud sayle,  
And of their taunting toies rest with il hayle.

*Nobilitati ignobilis cedat vilitas, &c.*

There is no noble man wil iudge in me  
Any such foly to rest or to be:  
I care muche the lesse what euer they say,  
For tungen vntayde be renning astray;  
But yet I may say safely, so many wel lettred  
Embraudred, enlasid together, and fettred,  
And so little learning, so lewdly alowed,  
What fault find ye herein but may be auowed?  
But ye are so full of vertibilite,  
And of frenetyke folabilite, 10  
And of melancoly mutabilite,  
That ye would coarte and enforce me  
Nothing to write, but hay the gy of thre,  
And I to suffre you lewdly to ly  
Of me with your language full of vilany!

*Sicut novacula acuta fecisti dolum. Ubi s.*

Malicious tungen, though they haue no bones,  
Are sharper then swordes, sturdier then stones.

*Lege Philostratum de vita Tyanæi Apollonii.*

Sharper then raysors that shaue and cut throtes,  
More stinging then scorpions that stang Phara-  
otis.

*Venenum aspidum sub labiis eorum. Ps.*

More venemous and much more virulent  
Then any poysoned tode or any serpent.

*Quid peregrinis egemus exemplis? ad domestica  
recurramus, &c. li. ille.*

Such tungen vnhappy hath made great diuision  
In realmes, in cities, by suche fals abusion ;  
Of fals fickil tungen suche cloked collusion  
Hath brought nobil princes to extreme confu-  
sion.

*Quicquid loquantur, ut effæminantur, ita effan-  
tur &c.*

Somtime women were put in great blame,  
Men said they could not their tungen atame ;  
But men take vpon them nowe all the shame,  
With skolding and sklaundering make their tungs  
lame.

*Novarum rerum cupidissimi, captatores, delatores, adulatores, invigilatores, deliratores, &c. id genus. li. ille.*

For men be now tratlers and tellers of tales ;  
 What tidings at Totnam, what newis in Wales,  
 What shippis are sailing to Scalys Malis ?  
 And all is not worth a couple of nut shalis :  
 But lering and lurking here and there like  
     spies ;  
 The deuil tere their tungen and pike out their  
     ies !  
 Then ren they with lesinges and blow them  
     about,  
 With, He wrate suche a bil withouten dout ;  
 With, I can tel you what such a man said ;  
 And you knew all, ye would be ill apayd. 10

*De more vulpino, gannientes ad aurem, fictas fabellas fabricant. il. ille.*

*Inauspicatum, male ominatum, infortunatum se fateatur habuisse horoscopum, quicumque male-dixerit vati Pierio, S[keltonidi] L[aureato], &c.*

But if that I knewe what his name hight,  
 For clatering of me I would him sone quight ;  
 For his false lying, of that I spake neuer,  
 I could make him shortly repent him for euer :  
 Although he made it neuer so tough,  
 He might be sure to haue shame ynough.

*Cerberus horrendo barathri latrando sub antro  
Te rodatque voret, lingua dolosa, precor.*

A fals double tunge is more fiers and fell  
Then Cerberus the cur couching in the kenel of  
hel;

Wherof hereafter I thinke for to write,  
Of fals double tungen in the dispite.

*Recipit se scripturum opus sanctum, laudabile,  
acceptabile, memorabileque, et nimis honorifi-  
candum.*

*Disperdat Dominus universa labia dolosa et lin-  
guam magniloquam!*

YE may here now, in this ryme,  
How euery thing must haue a tyme.\*

Tyme is a thing that no man may resyst ;  
Tyme is trancytory and irreuocable ;  
Who sayeth the contrary, tyme passeth as hym  
lyst ;  
Tyme must be taken in season couenable ;  
Take tyme when tyme is, for tyme is ay  
mutable ;  
All thyng hath tyme, who can for it prouyde ;  
Byde for tyme who wyll, for tyme wyll no man  
byde.

Tyme to be sad, and tyme to play and sporte ; 10  
Tyme to take rest by way of recreacion ;  
Tyme to study, and tyme to use comfort ;  
Tyme of pleasure, and tyme of consolation :  
Thus tyme hath his tyme of diuers maner  
facion :

\* This and the next three poems are from the ed. by Kynge and Marche of *Certaine booke compiled by mayster Skelton*, n. d., collated with the same work, ed. Day, n. d., and ed. Lant, and with Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568. I may here notice that in those eds. the present piece is preceded by a copy of verses, "All nobyll men of this take hede," &c., which will be given afterwards, before *Why come ye not to Courte ?* where it is repeated in all the eds.

Tyme for to eate and drynke for thy repast ;  
 Tyme to be lyberall, and tyme to make no wast ;

Tyme to trauell, and tyme for to rest ;  
 Tyme for to speake, and tyme to holde thy  
     pease ;

Tyme would be vsed when tyme is best ;  
 Tyme to begyn, and tyme for to cease ;      20  
 And when tyme is, [to] put thyselfe in prease,  
 And when tyme is, to holde thyselfe abacke ;  
 For tyme well spent can neuer haue lacke.

The rotys take theyr sap in tyme of vere ;  
 In tyme of somer flowres fresh and grene ;  
 In tyme of haruest men their corne shere ;  
 In tyme of wynter the north wynde waxeth kene,  
 So bytterly bytynge the flowres be not sene ;  
 The kalendis of Janus, with his frostes hore,      25  
 That tyme is when people must lyue vpon the store.  
                     Quod Skelton, Laureat.

## PRAYER TO THE FATHER OF HEAVEN.

O RADIANT Luminary of lyght intermynable,  
 Celestial Father, potenciall God of myght,  
 Of heauen and earth, O Lord incomperable,  
 Of all perfections the essencial most perfyght !  
 O Maker of mankynde, that formyd day and  
     nyghte,  
 Whose power imperyal comprehendeth euery  
     place !  
 Myne hert, my mynde, my thought, my hole  
     delyght  
 Is, after this lyfe, to see thy glorious face :

Whose magnifycence is incomprehensybyll,  
 All argumentes of reason which far doth excede,  
 Whose Deite dowlles is indiuysybyll,            "  
 From whom all goodnes and vertue doth pro-  
     cede ;  
 Of thy support all creatures haue nede :  
 Assyst me, good Lord, and graunte me of thy grace,  
 To lyue to thy pleasure in word, thoughte, and  
     dede,  
 And, after this lyfe, to see thy glorious face.

---

## TO THE SECONDE PARSON.

O BENYGNE Jesu, my souerayne Lord and Kynge,  
 The only Sonne of God by filiation,  
 The Seconde Parson withouten beginnyng,  
 Both God and man our fayth maketh playne  
     relacion,  
 Mary the mother, by way of incarnation,  
 Whose glorious passion our soules doth reuyue!  
 Agayne all bodely and goostely trybulacion  
 Defende me with thy piteous woundis fyue.

O pereles Prynce, payned to the deth,  
     Rufully rent, thy body wan and blo,      10  
 For my redempcion gaue vp thy vytall breth,  
     Was neuer sorow lyke to thy dedly wo!  
 Graunte me, out of this world when I shall go,  
 Thyne endles mercy for my preseruatyue;  
 Agaynst the world, the flesh, the deuyll also,  
 Defende me wyth thy pyteous woundis fyue.

---

 TO THE HOLY GOOSTE.

O FIRY feruence, inflamed wyth all grace,  
 Enkyndelyng hertes with brandis charitable,



The endles reward of pleasure and solace,  
To the Father and the Son thou art communi-  
cable

*In unitate* which is inseperable !

O water of lyfe, O well of consolacion !

Agaynst all suggestions dedly and dampnable

Rescu me, good Lorde, by your preseruacion :

To whome is appropried the Holy Ghost by name,

The Thyrde Parson, one God in Trinite,

Of perfyt loue thou art the ghostly flame :

O myrrour of mekenes, pease, and tranquylte,

My confort, my counsell, my parfyt charyte !

O water of lyfe, O well of consolacion !

Agaynst all stormys of harde aduersyte

Rescu me, good Lord, by thy preseruacion.

Amen.

Quod Skelton, Laureat.

WOFFULLY araid,\*  
 My blode, man,  
 For thé ran,  
 It may not be naid ;  
 My body bloo and wan,  
 Woffully araid.

Beholde me, I pray thé, with all thi hole reson,  
 And be not so hard hartid, and ffor this encheson,  
 Sith I for thi sowle sake was slayne in good seson,  
 Begylde and betraide by Judas fals treson ;    10  
     Vnkyndly entretid,  
     With sharpe corde sore fretid,  
     The Jewis me thretid,  
 They mowid, they grynned, they scornyd me,  
 Condempnyd to deth, as thou maist se,  
     Woffully araid.

\* From the Fairfax MS. (which once belonged to Ralph Thoresby, and now forms part of the Additional MSS., 5465, in the British Museum), where it occurs twice,—(fol. 76 and, less perfectly, fol. 88); collated with a copy written in a very old hand on the fly-leaves of *Boetius de Discip. Schol. cum notabili commento*, Davenport, 1496, 4to. (in the collection of the late Mr. Heber), which has supplied several stanzas not in the Fairfax MS. It was printed from the latter, not very correctly, by Sir John Hawkins, *Hist. of Music*, ii. 89. I have followed the metrical arrangement of the MS. in the *Boetius*.

Thus nakyd am I nailid, O man, for thy sake !  
 I loue thé, then loue me; why slepist thou? awake!  
 Remembir my tendir hart rote for thé brake, 18  
 With panys my vaynys constreyn[e]d to crake;  
     Thus toggid to and fro,  
     Thus wrappid all in woo,  
     Whereas neuer man was so,  
 Entretid thus in most cruell wyse,  
 Was like a lombe offerd in sacrifice,  
     Woffully araid.

Off sharpe thorne I haue worne a crowne on my  
     hede,  
 So paynyd, so straynyd, so rufull, so red;  
 Thus bobbid, thus robbid,<sup>1</sup> thus for thy loue ded,  
 Onfaynyd<sup>2</sup> not deynyd my blod for to shed; 20  
     My fete and handes sore  
     The sturdy nailis bore;  
     What myȝt I suffir more  
 Than I haue don, O man, for thé?  
 Cum when thou list, wellcum to me,  
     Woffully araide.<sup>3</sup>

Off record thy good Lord y haue beyn and schal  
     bee;  
 Y am thyn, thou artt myne, my brother y call thee

<sup>1</sup> *bobbid . . robbid*] MS. in the *Boetius*, "bowde . . rowyd."

<sup>2</sup> *Onfaynyd*] MS. in the *Boetius*, "Unfraynyd."

<sup>3</sup> *Woffully araide*] Here the Fairfax MS. concludes: what follows is given from the MS. in the *Boetius*.

Thé love I enterly ; see whatt ys befall me !  
 Sore bettyng, sore thretyng, too mak thee, man,  
 all fre : 40

Why art thou wnkynde ?  
 Why hast nott mee yn mynde ?  
 Cum 3ytt, and thou schalt fynde  
 Myne endlis mercy and grace ;  
 See how a spere my hert dyd race,  
 Woyfully arayd.

Deyr brother, noo other thyng y off thee desyre  
 Butt gyve me thyne hert fre to rewarde myn hyre :  
 Y wrou3t thé, I bowg3t thé frome eternal fyre ;  
 Y pray thé aray thé tooward my hyzt empyre, 50  
 Above<sup>1</sup> the oryent,  
 Wheroff y am regent,  
 Lord God omnypotent,  
 Wyth me too reyn yn endlis welthe ;  
 Remember, man, thy sawlys helthe.

Woofully arayd,  
 My blode, man,  
 For thé rane,  
 Hytt may nott be nayd ;  
 My body blow and wane, 60  
 Woyfully arayde.

Explicit qd. Skelton.

<sup>1</sup> Above] MS. "I love."

Now synge we, as we were wont,  
*Vexilla regis prodeunt.* \*

The kinges baner on felde is [s]playd,  
 The crosses mistry can not be nayd,  
 To whom our Sauyours was betrayd,  
     And for our sake;  
 Thus sayth he,  
 I suffre for thé,  
     My deth I take.  
         Now synge we, &c.

Beholde my shankes, behold my knees, 10  
 Beholde my hed, armes, and thees,  
 Beholde of me nothyng thou sees  
     But sorowe and pyne;  
 Thus was I spylt,  
 Man, for thy gylte,  
     And not for myne.  
         Now synge we, &c.

\* From *Bibliographical Miscellanies* (edited by the Rev. Dr. Bliss), 1818, 4to, p. 48, where it is given from an imperfect volume (or fragments of volumes) of black-letter *Christmas Carolles*, partly (but probably not wholly) printed by Kele.

Behold my body, how Jewes it donge  
With knots of whipcord and scourges strong;  
As stremes of a well the blode out sprong

On euery syde;

The knottes were knyt,  
Ryght well made with wyt,  
They made woundes wyde.

Now synge we, &c.

Man, thou shalt now vnderstand,  
Of my head, bothe fote and hand,  
Are four c. and fyue thousand

Woundes and sixty;

Fifty and vii.

Were tolde full euen

Vpon my body.

Now synge we, &c.

Syth I for loue bought thé so dere,  
As thou may se thy self here,  
I pray thé with a ryght good chere

Loue me agayne,

That it lykes me

To suffre for thé

Now all this payne.

Now synge we, &c.

Man, vnderstand now thou shall,  
In sted of drynke they gaue me gall,  
And eysell mengled therwithall,

The Jewes fell ;  
These paynes on me  
I suffred for thé  
To bryng thé fro hell.  
Now synge we, &c.

Now for thy lyfe thou hast mysled,  
Mercy to aske be thou not adred ;  
The lest drop of blode that I for thé bled  
Myght clense thé soone  
Of all the syn  
The worlde within,  
If thou haddest doone.  
Now synge we, &c.

I was more wrother with Judas,  
For he wold no mercy aske,  
Than I was for his trespas  
Whan he me solde ;  
I was euer redy  
To graunt hym mercy,  
But he none wolde.  
Now synge we, &c.

Lo, how I hold my armes abrode,  
Thé to receyue redy isprode !  
For the great loue that I to thé had  
Well may thou knowe,  
Some loue agayne  
I wolde full fayne

Thou woldest to me shewe.

Now synge we, &c.

For loue I aske nothyng of thé  
But stand fast in faythe, and syn thou fle,  
And payne to lyue in honeste  
Bothe nyght and day ;  
And thou shalt have blys  
That neuer shall mys  
Withouten nay.

70

Now synge we, &c.

Now, Jesu, for thy great goodnes,  
That for man suffred great hardnes,  
Saue vs fro the deuyls cruelnes,  
And to blys us send,  
And graunt vs grace  
To se thy face  
Withouten ende.

Now synge we, &c.



[“ CCCCXXXII.

*“Codex membranaceus in 4to, seculo xiv scriptus, figuris illuminatis, sed injuria temporis pene deletis ornatus, in quo continetur,*

*I. Polichronitudo basileos sive historia belli quod Ricardus I. gessit contra Sarracenos, Gallice.*

*Hoc opus Skeltono ascribitur a Ol. Stanleio ; primo autem intuitu satis liquet codicem ipsum longe ante tempus quo claruit Skeltonus fuisse scriptum, ab eoque regi dono missum, ut testantur sequentes versus diverso et recenti caractere primæ paginæ inscripti : \**

*I, liber, et propera, regem tu pronus adora ;  
Me sibi commendes humilem Skeltonida vatem :  
Ante suam majestatem, (per cætera passim,)   
Inclyta bella refer, gessit quæ maximus heros  
Anglorum, primus nostra de gente Ricardus,  
Hector ut intrepidus, contra validissima castra  
Gentis Agarenæ ; memora quos ille labores,  
Quos tulit angores, qualesque recepit honores.  
Sed*

*Chronica Francorum, validis inimica Britannis,  
Sæpe solent celebres Britonum compescere laudes.*

\* Nasmith's Catal. Libr. Manuscript. quos Coll. Corporis Christi et B. Mariæ Virginis in Acad. Cantabrig. legavit Reverendiss. in Christo Pater Matthæus Parker, Archiepisc. Cantuar. p. 400. 1777, 4to.

HERE AFTER FOLOWETH THE BOKE ENTITULED

WARE THE HAUKE,\*

PER SKELTON, LAUREAT.

PROLOGUS SKELTONIDIS LAUREATI SUPER WARE THE  
HAWKE.

THIS worke deuysed is  
For such as do amys;  
And specyally to controule  
Such as haue cure of soule,  
That be so farre abused,  
They cannot be excused  
By reason nor by law;  
But that they play the daw,  
To hawke, or els to hunt  
From the aulter to the funte, 10  
With cry vnreuerent,  
Before the sacrament,  
Within the holy church bowndis,  
That of our faith the grounde is.  
That pryest that hawkys so,  
All grace is farre him fro;

\* From the ed. by Kynge and Marche of *Certaine bokes compyled by mayster Skelton*, n. d., collated with the same work, ed. Day, n. d., and ed. Lant, n. d., and with Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568.

He semeth a sysmatyke,  
Or els an heretyke,  
For fayth in him is faynte.  
Therefore to make complaynte  
Of such mysaduysed  
Parsons and dysgysed,  
This boke we haue deuysed,  
Compendiously comprysed,  
No good priest to offende,  
But suche dawes to amende,  
In hope that no man shall  
Be myscontent withall.

I shall you make relacion,  
By waye of apostrofacion,  
Vnder supportacion  
Of youre pacyent tolleracion,  
How I, Skelton Laureat,  
Deuysed and also wrate  
Vpon a lewde curate,  
A parson benyfyced,  
But nothing well aduysed :  
He shall be as now nameles,  
But he shall not be blameles,  
Nor he shal not be shameles ;  
For sure he wrought amys,  
To hawke in my church of Dis.  
This fonde frantyke fauconer,  
With his polutid pawtenar,  
As priest vnreuerent,  
Streight to the sacrament

30

30

40

He made his hawke to fly,  
 With hogenous showte and cry.  
 The hye auter he strypt naked ;  
 There on he stode, and craked ;  
 He shoke downe all the clothis,  
 And sware horrible othes  
 Before the face of God,  
 By Moyses and Arons rod,  
 Or that he thens yede,  
 His hawke shoulde pray and fede  
 Vpon a pigeons maw.  
 The bloude ran downe raw  
 Vpon the auter stone ;  
 The hawke tyrid on a bonne ;  
 And in the holy place  
 She mutid there a chase  
 Vpon my corporas face.  
 Such *sacrificium laudis*  
 He made with suche gambawdis.

## OBSERVATE.

His seconde hawke wexid gery,  
 And was with flying wery ;  
 She had flowin so oft,  
 That on the rode loft  
 She perkyd her to rest.  
 The fauconer then was prest,  
 Came runnyng with a dow,  
 And cryed, Stow, stow, stow !  
 But she would not bow.

He then, to be sure,  
 Callid her with a lure.  
 Her mete was very crude,  
 She had not wel endude;  
 She was not clene ensaymed,  
 She was not well reclaymed:      80  
 But the fawconer vnfayned  
 Was much more febler brayned.  
 The hawke had no lyst  
 To come to hys fyst;  
 She loked as she had the frounce;  
 With that he gaue her a bounce  
 Full vpon the gorge:  
 I wyll not fayne nor forge;  
 The hawke with that clap  
 Fell downe with euyll hap.      80  
 The church dores were sparred,  
 Fast boltyd and barryd,  
 Yet wyth a prety gyn  
 I fortunèd to come in,  
 This rebell to beholde,  
 Wherof I hym controlde;  
 But he sayde that he woulde,  
 Agaynst my mynde and wyll,  
 In my churchè hawke styll.

## CONSIDERATE.

On Sainct John decollacion      100  
 He hawked on this facion,  
*Tempore vesperarum,*  
*Sed non secundum Sarum,*

But lyke a Marche harum,  
 His braynes were so *parum*.  
 He sayde he would not let  
 His houndis for to fet,  
 To hunte there by lyberte  
 In the dyspyte of me,  
 And to halow there the fox : 110  
 Downe went my offerynge box,  
 Boke, bell, and candyll,  
 All that he myght handyll :  
 Cros, staffe, lectryne, and banner,  
 Fell downe on this manner.

## DELIBERATE.

With, troll, cytrace, and trouy,  
 They ranged, hankin bouy,  
 My churche all aboute.  
 This fawconer then gan showte,  
 These be my gospellers, 120  
 These be my pystillers,  
 These be my querysters,  
 To helpe me to synge,  
 My hawkes to mattens rynges.  
 In this priestly gydynges  
 His hawke then flew vppon  
 The rode with Mary and John.  
 Delt he not lyke a fon ?  
 Delt he not lyke a daw ?  
 Or els is this Goddes law, 130  
 Decrees or decretals,  
 VOL. I. 12

Or holy sinodals,  
 Or els prouincials,  
 Thus within the wals  
 Of holy church to deale,  
 Thus to rynge a peale  
 With his hawkis bels ?  
 Dowtles such losels  
 Make the church to be  
 In smale auctoryte :  
 A curate in speciall  
 To snappar and to fall  
 Into this open cryme ;  
 To loke on this were tyme.

100

## VIGILATE.

But who so that lokys  
 In the officialis bokis,  
 Ther he may se and reed  
 That this is matter indeed.  
 How be it, mayden Meed  
 Made theym to be agreed,  
 And so the Scrybe was feed,  
 And the Pharasay  
 Than durst nothing say,  
 But let the matter slyp,  
 And made truth to trip ;  
 And of the spiritual law  
 They made but a gewgaw,  
 And toke it out in drynke,  
 And this the cause doth shrynke :

150

The church is thus abused, 166  
 Reproched and pollutyd :  
 Correccion hath no place,  
 And all for lacke of grace.

## DEPLORATE.

Loke now in *Exodi*,  
 And *de arca Domini*,  
 With *Regum* by and by ;  
 The Bybyll wyll not ly ;  
 How the Temple was kept,  
 How the Temple was swept,  
 Where *sanguis taurorum*, 170  
*Aut sanguis vitulorum*,  
 Was offryd within the wallis,  
 After ceremoniallis ;  
 When it was poluted,  
 Sentence was executed,  
 By wey of expiacion,  
 For reconciliacion.

DIVINITATE.<sup>1</sup>

Then muche more, by the rode,  
 Where Christis precious blode  
 Dayly offred is, 180  
 To be poluted this ;  
 And that he wysshed withall  
 That the dowues donge downe might fal

<sup>1</sup> *Divinitate*] Qy. "Divinate?"



Into my chalis at mas,  
 When consecrated was  
 The blessed sacrament :  
 O priest vnreuerent !  
 He sayde that he woulde hunt  
 From the aulter to the funt.

## REFORMATE.

Of no tyrande I rede,  
 That so farre dyd excede ;  
 Neyther yet Dioclesyan,  
 Nor yet Domisian,  
 Nor yet coked Cacus,  
 Nor yet dronken Bacus ;  
 Nother Olibrius,  
 Nor Dionisyus ;  
 Nother Phalary,  
 Rehersed in Valery ;  
 Nor Sardanapall,  
 Vnhappiest of all ;  
 Nor Nero the worst,  
 Nor Clawdius the curst ;  
 Nor yet Egeas,  
 Nor yet Syr Pherumbras ;  
 Nother Zorobabell,  
 Nor cruel Jesabell ;  
 Nor yet Tarquinius,  
 Whom Tytus Liuius  
 In wrytynge doth enroll ;  
 I haue red them poll by poll ;

180

180

180

The story of Arystobell,  
And of Constantinopell,  
Whiche cite miscreantys wan,  
And slew many a Christen man ;  
Yet the Sowden, nor the Turke,  
Wrought neuer suche a worke,  
For to let theyr hawkes fly  
In the Church of Saint Sophy ;  
With much matter more, 280  
That I kepe in store.

## PENSITATE.

Then in a tabull playne  
I wroute a verse or twayne,  
Whereat he made dysdayne :  
The pekysh parsons brayne  
Cowde not rech nor attayne  
What the sentence ment ;  
He sayde, for a crokid intent  
The wordes were paruerted :  
And this he ouerthwarted. 290  
Of the which proces  
Ye may know more expres,  
If it please you to loke  
In the resydew of this boke.

*Here after followeth the tabull.*

Loke on this tabull,  
Whether thou art abull

To rede or to spell  
What these verses tell.

*Sicculo lutueris est colo būraarā*<sup>1</sup>  
*Nixphedras uisarum caniuter tuntantes*<sup>2</sup>  
*Raterplas Natābrian*<sup>3</sup> *umsudus itnugenus.*  
 18 . 10 . 2 . 11 . 19 . 4 . 13 . 3 . 3 . 1 . *tēualet*.<sup>4</sup>  
*Chartula stet, precor, hæc nullo temeranda petulco.*  
*Hos rapiet numeros non homo, sed mala bos.*  
*Ex parte rem chartæ adverte aperte, pone Musam*  
*Arethusam hanc.*

Whereto should I rehers  
The sentence of my vers?  
In them be no scholys  
For braynsycke frantycke folys:  
*Construas hoc,*  
*Domine Dawcocke!*  
Ware the hawke!  
*Maister sophista,*  
*Ye simplex syllogista,*  
*Ye deuelysh dogmatista,*  
Your hawke on your fista,

240

<sup>1</sup> *būraarā*] In Day's ed. the final letter of this word being blurred looks like a *d*; and Marshe's ed. has "bunraard." The meaning of this "tabull playne" is quite beyond my comprehension.

<sup>2</sup> *tuntantes*] Marshe's ed. "tauntantes."

<sup>3</sup> *Natābrian*] Eds. of Day, and Marshe, "Natanbrian." The Editor of 1786 prints "*Natanbrianum suchus*."

<sup>4</sup> *tēualet*] Perhaps, "ten (10) valet."

To hawke when you lista 280

*In ecclesia ista,*

*Domine concupisti,*<sup>1</sup>

With thy hawke on thy fisty?

*Nunquid sic dixisti?*

*Nunquid sic fecisti?*

*Sed ubi hoc legisti*

*Aut unde hoc,*

Doctor Dawcocke?

Ware the hawke!

Doctor *Dialetica,* 280

Where fynde you in *Hypothetica,*

Or in *Categoria,*

*Latina sive Dorica,*

To vse your hawkys *forica*

*In propitiatorio,*

*Tanquam diversorio?*

*Unde hoc,*

*Domine* Dawcocke?

Ware the hawke!

Saye to me, Jacke Harys, 280

*Quare aucuparis*

*Ad sacramentum altaris?*

For no reuerens thou sparys

To shake my pygeons federis

*Super arcam fæderis:*

*Unde hoc,*

Doctor Dawcocke?

Ware the hawke!

<sup>1</sup> *concupisti*] Eds. "racapisti" and "cacapisti."

Sir *Dominus vobiscum,*  
*Per aucupium*  
 Ye made your hawke to cum  
*Desuper candelabrum*  
*Christi crucifixi*  
 To fede vpon your fisty:  
*Dic, inimice crucis Christi,*  
*Ubi didicisti*  
*Facere hoc,*  
*Domine Dawcocke?*

200

Ware the hawke!

Apostata Julianus,  
 Nor yet Nestorianus,  
 Thou shalt no where rede  
 That they dyd suche a dede,  
 To let theyr hawkys fly  
*Ad ostium tabernaculi,*  
*In quo est corpus Domini:*  
*Cave hoc,*  
 Doctor Dawcocke!

200

Ware the hawke!

This dowlles ye rauyd,  
 Dys church ye thus deprauyd;  
 Wherfore, as I be sauyd,  
 Ye are therefore beknauyd:  
*Quare? quia Evangelia,*  
*Concha et conchylia,*  
*Accipiter et sonalia,*  
*Et bruta animalia,*  
*Cætera quoque talia*

200

*Tibi sunt æqualia :*

*Unde hoc,*

210

*Domine Dawcocke?*

Ware the hawke!

*Et relis et ralis,*

*Et reliqualis,*

From Granado to Galis,

From Wynchelsee to Walys,

*Non est braynsycke talis,*

*Nec minus rationalis,*

*Nec magis bestialis,*

That synggys with a chalys:

220

*Construas hoc,*

Doctor Dawcocke!

Ware the hawke!

Masyd, wytles, smery smyth,

Hampar with your hammer vpon thy styth,

And make hereof a syckyll or a saw,

For thoughe ye lyue a c. yere, ye shall dy a daw.

*Vos valete,*

*Doctor indiscrete!*

---

SKELTONIS APOSTROPHAT AD DIVUM JOHANNEM DECOL-  
LATUM, IN CUJUS PROFESTO FIEBAT HOC AUCUPIUM.

*O memoranda dies, qua, decollate Johannes,  
Aucupium facit, haud quondam quod fecerit, intra  
Ecclesiam de Dis, violans tua sacra sacrorum!*

*Rector de Whipstok, doctor cognomine Daucock,  
Et dominus Wodcock; probat is, probat hic, pro-  
bat hæc hoc.*

IDEM <sup>1</sup> DE LIBERA DICACITATE POETICA IN EXTOLLENDÆ  
PROBITATE, ET IN PERFRICANDA IGNOBILITATE.

*Libertas veneranda piis concessa poetis  
Dicendi est quæcunque placent, quæcunque juva-  
bunt,  
Vel quæcunque valent justas defendere causas,  
Vel quæcunque valent stolidos mordere petulcos.  
Ergo dabis veniam.*

Quod Skelton, laureat.

<sup>1</sup> *Idem, &c.*] These lines follow *Ware the Hawk* in all the  
eds.

EPITHAPHE.\*

THIS tretise devysed it is  
Of two knaues somtyme of Dis.  
Though this knaues be deade,  
Full of myschiefe and queed,  
Yet, where so euer they ly,  
Theyr names shall neuer dye.

*Compendium de duobus versipellis, John Jay-  
berd, et Adam all a knaue, deque illorum no-  
tissima vilitate.*

A DEUOUTE TRENTALE FOR OLD JOHN CLARKE, SOMETIME  
THE HOLY PATRIARKE OF DIS.

*Sequitur trigintale  
Tale quale rationale,  
Licet parum curiale,  
Tamen satis est formale,  
Joannis Clerc, hominis  
Cujusdam multinominis,*

\* From Marsha's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568.



*Joannes Jayberd qui vocatur,  
 Clerc cleribus nuncupatur.  
 Obiit sanctus iste pater  
 Anno Domini MD. sexto. 10  
 In parochia de Dis  
 Non erat sibi similis ;  
 In malitia vir insignis,  
 Duplex corde et bilinguis ;  
 Senio confectus,  
 Omnibus suspectus,  
 Nemini dilectus,  
 Sepultus est amonge the wedes :  
 God forgeue hym his mysdedes !*

*Dulce melos  
 Penetrans cœlos.*

*Carmina cum cannis  
 cantemus festa Joannis :  
 Clerk obiit vere,  
 Jayberd nomenque dedere ;  
 Dis populo natus,  
 Clerk cleribus estque vocatus,  
 Hic vir Chaldæus,  
 nequam ver, ceu Jebusæus,  
 In Christum Domini 10  
 fremuit de more cameli,  
 Rectori proprio  
 tam verba retorta loquendo*

*Unde resultando-  
que Acheronta*<sup>1</sup> *boando tonaret.*

*Nunquam sincere  
solitus sua crimina flere ;  
Cui male lingua loquax-  
que dicax mendaxque, fuere  
Et mores tales  
resident in nemine quales ;*

20

*Carpens vitales  
auras, turbare sodales  
Et cines socios,  
asimus, mulus velut, et bos.  
Omne suum studium  
rubeum pictum per amictum  
Discolor ; et victum  
faciens semper maledictum  
Ex intestinis ovium-  
que boumque caprorum ;  
Tendens adque forum,  
fragmentum colligit horum  
Dentibus exemptis  
mastigat cumque polentis*

20

<sup>1</sup> *que Acheronta, ꝑc. . . . que dicax, ꝑc.*] Perhaps these passages ought to be arranged thus for the sake of the rhyme ;

*" que Acheronta boando  
tonaret. Nunquam sincere," ꝑc.*

*" que dicax mendax-  
que, fuere Et mores tales," ꝑc.*

But from the rest of the poem it seems that Skelton intended each hexameter to be cut only into two parts.

*Lanigerum caput aut ovis*<sup>1</sup>  
*aut vaccæ mugientis.*  
*Quid petis, hic sit quis?*  
*John Jayberd, incola de Dis;*  
*Cui, dum vixerat is,*  
*sociantur jurgia, vis, lis.*

40

*Jam jacet hic* starke deed,  
 Neuer a toth in his heed.  
 Adieu, Jayberd, adue,  
 I faith, dikkon thou crue!

*Fratres, orate*  
 For this knauate,  
 By the holy rode,  
 Dyd neuer man good:  
 I pray you all,  
 And pray shall,  
 At this trentall  
 On knees to fall  
 To the fote ball;  
 With, fill the blak bowle  
 For Jayberdes sowle.

60

*Bibite multum:*

*Ecce sepultum*  
*Sub pede stultum,*  
*Asinum, et mulum!*

The deuill kis his *culum*!  
 Wit[h], hey, howe, rumbelowe,

80

<sup>1</sup> *caput aut ovis*] Ed. "caput caput." I give the conjectural reading of the Rev. J. Mitford. The rhyme suggests (but the metre will not allow) "bidentis."

*Rumpopulorum,  
Per omnia secula seculorum ! Amen.*

*Requiem, &c.*

*Per Fredericum Hely,  
Fratrem de Monte Carmeli,  
Qui condunt sine sale  
Hoc devotum trigintale.  
Vale Jayberd, valde male !*

Adam Vddersall,<sup>1</sup>  
*Alias dictus* Adam all  
a knaue, his  
Epitaph foloweth deuoutly ;  
He was somtime the holy  
Baillvue of Dis.

Of Dis  
*Adam degebat :*  
*dum vixit, falsa gerebat,*

<sup>1</sup> *Vddersall, &c.*] In this passage I have adopted the arrangement proposed by the Rev. J. Mitford.—Ed. thus:

“ Adam Vddersale. alias dictus  
Adam all. a knaue his Epitaph.  
Foloweth deuoutly,  
He was somtime the holy  
baillvue of dis.”

*Namque extorquebat  
 quicquid nativus habebat,  
 Aut liber natus ; rapidus  
 lupus inde vocatus :  
 Ecclesiamque satus  
 de Belial iste Pilatus  
 Sub pede calcatus  
 violavit, nunc violatus :  
 Perfidus, iratus,  
 numquam fuit ille beatus : 10  
 Uddersall stratus  
 benedictis est spoliatus,  
 Improbus, inflatus,  
 maledictis jam laceratus :  
 Dis,<sup>1</sup> tibi bacchatus  
 ballivus prædominatus :  
 Hic fuit ingratus,  
 porcus velut insatiatus, 20  
 Pinguis, crassatus ;  
 velut Agag sit reprobatus !  
 Crudelisque Cacus  
 barathro, peto, sit tumultatus !  
 Belsabub his soule saue,  
 Qui jacet hic, like a knaue !  
 Jam scio mortuus est,  
 Et jacet hic, like a best.*

<sup>1</sup> *Dis, tibi, &c.*] The emendation of the Rev. J. Mitford: compare above, "Baillune of Dis."—Ed.

"Sis tibi baccatus  
 Balian prædominatus."

*Anima ejus  
De malo in pejus. Amen.*      20

*De Dis hæc semper erit camena,  
Adam Uddersall sit anathema!*

*Auctore Skelton, rectore de Dis.*

*Finis, &c. Apud Trumpinton scriptum per  
Curatum ejusdem, quinto die Januarii Anno  
Domini, secundum computat. Angliæ, MDVII.*

*Adam, Adam, ubi es? Genesis. Re. Ubi nulla  
requies, ubi nullus ordo, sed sempiternus horror  
inhabitat. Job.*

*Diligo rustincum \* cum portant bis duo quointum,  
Et cantant delos est mihi dulce melos.*

1. *Canticum dolorosum.*

LAMENTATIO URBIS NORVICEN.

*O lacrymosa lues nimis, O quam flebile fatum!  
Ignibus exosis, urbs veneranda, ruis;  
Fulmina sive Jovis sive ultima fata vocabant,  
Vulcani rapidis ignibus ipsa peris.  
Ah decus, ah patriæ specie pulcherrima dudum!  
Urbs Norvicensis labitur in cineres.  
Urbs, tibi quid referam? breviter tibi pauca re-  
ponam:*

*Prospera rara manent, utere sorte tua;  
Perpetuum mortale nihil, sors omnia versat.  
Urbs miseranda, vale! sors miseranda tua est.*  
Skelton.

\* This and the following piece are from Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568. In that collection the present couplet is twice printed: "*rustincum*" is the reading of the first copy, "*rusticum*" (which the metre will not admit) of the second: the first copy has "*quointum*," the second "*quointum*;" the Editor of 1786 gave "*quantum*." See notes for the conjectures of the Rev. J. Mitford on this enigma. "*Canticum dolorosum*" is probably part of the title of the next piece.

IN BEDEL, QUONDAM BELIAL INCARNATUM, DEVOTUM  
EPIITAPHIUM.

*Ismal, ecce, Bedel, non mel, sed fel, sibi des el!*<sup>1</sup>  
*Perfidus Achitophel, luridus atque lorell;*  
*Nunc olet iste Jebal,*<sup>2</sup> *Nabal. S. Nabal, ecce, ri-*  
*baldus!*

*Omnibus exosus atque perosus erat;*  
*In plateaque cadens animam spiravit oleto:*  
*Presbyteros odiens sic sine mente ruit.*  
*Discite vos omnes quid sit violare sacros*  
*Presbyteros, quia sic corruit iste canis.*  
*Cocytus cui si detur*<sup>3</sup> *per Tartara totus,*  
*Sit, peto, promotus Cerberus huncque voret.*<sup>10</sup>  
*At mage sanctu tamen mea Musa precabitur atros*  
*Hos lemuresque eat sic Bedel ad superos;*  
*Non eat, immo ruat, non scandat, sed mage tendat,*  
*Inque caput præceps mox Acheronta petat.*

*Bedel. Quanta malignatus est inimicus in sancto!*  
 Psa. 73.

*Mortuus est asinus,*  
*Qui pinxit mulum:*

<sup>1</sup> *des el*] The Rev. J. Mitford proposes "dorell."

<sup>2</sup> *Jebal*] Qy. "Jabel?" but I do not understand the line.

<sup>3</sup> *si detur*] So the Rev. J. Mitford reads. Ed. "sic petus."



*Hic jacet barbarus ;*  
*The deuill kys his calum ! Amen.*

*Hanc volo transcribas, transcriptam moxque re-*  
*mittas*

*Pagellam ; quia sunt qui mea scripta sciunt.*

*Redde* { *Igitur quia sunt qui mala cuncta fremunt,*  
          { *Igitur quia sunt qui bona cuncta premunt.*  
          *Nec tamen expaveo de fatuo labio,*  
          *Nec multum paveo de stolido rabulo.*

*Salve plus\* decies quam sunt momenta dierum!  
Quot generum species, quot res, quot nomina rerum,  
Quot prati flores, quot sunt et in orbe colores,  
Quot pisces, quot aves, quot sunt et in æquore  
naves,  
Quot volucrum pennæ, quot sunt tormenta gehennæ,  
Quot cæli stellæ, quot sunt et in orbe puellæ,  
Quot sancti Romæ, quot sunt miracula Thomæ,  
Quot sunt virtutes, tantas tibi mitto salutes.*

\* From Marsha's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568, (where it is printed on the reverse of the title-page,) collated with a copy in Additional MSS. Brit. Mus. (4787, fol. 224,) which is headed "Ex Jo. Skeltono Poeta Laureato."

198 EPITAPHIUM IN HENRICUM SEPTIMUM.

ORATOR REGIUS SKELTONIS LAUREATUS IN SINGULARE  
MERITISSIMUMQUE PRÆCONIUM NOBILISSIMI PRINCIPIS  
HENRICI SEPTIMI, NUPER STRENUISSIMI REGIS ANGLIÆ.  
HOC EPITAPHIUM EDIDIT, AD SINCERAM CONTEMPLA-  
TIONEM REVERENDI IN CHRISTO PATRIS AC DOMINI,  
DOMINI JOHANNIS ISLIPPÆ ABBATIS WESTMONASTERIEN-  
SIS OPTIME MERITI, ANNO DOMINI MDXII. PRIDIE DIVI  
ANDRÆ APOSTOLI, &C. \*

*Tristia Melpomenes cogor modo plectra sonare ,  
Hos elegos foveat Cynthius ille meos.  
Si quas fata movent lacrymas, lacrymare videtur  
Jam bene maturum, si bene mente sapis.  
Flos Britonum, regum speculum, Salomonis imago,  
Septimus Henricus mole sub hac tegitur.  
Punica, dum regnat, redolens rosa digna vocari,  
Jam jam marcescit, ceu levis umbra fugit.  
Multa novercantis fortunæ, multa faventis  
Passus, et infractus tempus utrumque tulit. 10  
Nobilis Anchises, armis metuendus Atrides,  
Hic erat ; hunc Scottus rex timuit Jacobus.  
Spiramenta animæ vegetans dum vescitur aura,  
Francorum populus conticuit pavidus.*

\* This and the next piece from Marsha's ed. of Skelton's  
*Workes*, 1568, collated with the poems as given in *Reges*,  
*Regina, Nobiles, et alii in Ecclesia Collegiata B. Petri West-*  
*monasterii sepulti, &c.*, 1608, 4to.

*Immensas sibi divitias cumulasse quid horres?*

*Ni cumulasset opes, forte, Britanne, luas.*

*Urgentes casus tacita si mente volutes,*

*Vix tibi sufficeret aurea ripa Tagi.*

*Ni sua te probitas consulta mente laborans*

*Rexisset satius, vix tibi tuta salus.* 20

*Sed quid plura cano? meditans quid plura voluto?*

*Quisque vigil sibi sit: mors sine lege rapit.*

*Ad Dominum, qui cuncta regit, pro principe tanto*

*Funde preces quisquis carmina nostra legis.*

*Vel mage,\* si placeat, hunc timuit Jacobus,*

*Scottorum dominus, qui sua fata luit;*

*Quem Leo Candidior Rubeum necat ense Leonem,*

*Et jacet usque modo non tumultatus humo.*

*Refrigerii sedem, quietis beatitudinem, luminis*

*habeat claritatem. Amen.*

EULOGIUM PRO SUORUM TEMPORUM CONDITIONE, TANTIS

PRINCIPIBUS NON INDIGNUM, PER SKELTONIDA

LAUREATUM, ORATOREM REGIUM.

*Huc, pia Calliope, propera, mea casta puella,*

*Et mecum resona carmina plena deo.*

\* *humo*] Not in *Reges*, &c. These lines (containing an allusion to the battle of Flodden) are of a later date than the preceding poem, to the 12th verse of which they are intended as a sort of note. This is not the only passage in our author's Latin pieces where two pentameters occur without an intervening hexameter: see conclusion of *The Garlande of Laurell*.

*Septimus Henricus, Britonum memorabilis heros,  
 Anglica terra, tuus magnanimus Priamus,  
 Attalus hic opibus, rigidus Cato, clarus Acestes,  
 Sub gelido clausus marmore jam recubat.  
 Sic honor omnis, opes, probitas, sic gloria regum,  
 Omnia nutabunt mortis ad imperium.  
 Anglia, num lacrymas? rides; lacrymare quid  
 obstas?*

*Dum vixit, lacrymas; dum moritur, jubilas. 10  
 Canta, tamen penses, dum vixerat, Angligenenses  
 Vibrabant enses, bella nec ulla timent.  
 Undique bella fremunt nunc, undique praelia  
 surgunt:*

*Noster honor solus, filius, ecce, suus!  
 Noster honor solus, qui pondera tanta subire  
 Non timet, intrepidus arma gerenda vocat;  
 Arma gerenda vocat, (superi sua caepa secun-  
 dent!)*

*Ut quatiat Pallas ægida sæpe rogat.  
 Sors tamen est versanda diu, sors ultima belli:  
 Myrmidonum dominus Marte silente ruit; 20  
 Et quem non valuit validis superare sub armis  
 Mars, tamen occubuit insidiis Paridis.  
 Nos incerta quidem pro certis ponere rebus  
 Arguit, et prohibet Delius ipse pater.  
 Omnia sunt hominum dubio labentia fato,  
 Marte sub incerto militat omnis homo.  
 Omne decus nostrum, nostra et spes unica  
 tantum,  
 Jam bene qui regnat, hunc Jovis umbra tegat!*

*Ut quævis mentem labor est inhibere volentem,  
Pauca tamen liceat dicere pace sua :  
Pace tua liceat mihi nunc tibi dicere pauca,  
Dulce meum decus, et sola Britanna salus.  
Summa rei nostræ remanet, celeberrime princeps,  
In te præcipuo, qui modo sceptrâ geris.  
Si tibi fata favent, faveant precor atque precabor,  
Anglia, tunc plaude ; sin minus, ipsa vale.*

*Polychronitudo basileos.*

## TETRASTICHON VERITATIS.

*Felix qui bustum formasti, rex, tibi cuprum ;  
Auro si tectus fueras, fueras spoliatus,  
Nudus, prostratus, tanta est rabiosa cupido  
Undique nummorum : rex, pace precor requiescas.  
Amen.*

*Lanigerum caput aut ovis*<sup>1</sup>

*aut vaccæ mugientis.*

*Quid petis, hic sit quis?*

*John Jayberd, incola de Dis;*

*Cui, dum vixerat is,*

*sociantur jurgia, vis, lis.* 40

*Jam jacet hic starke deed,*

Neuer a toth in his heed.

Adieu, Jayberd, adue,

I faith, dikkon thou crue!

*Fratres, orate*

For this knauate,

By the holy rode,

Dyd neuer man good:

I pray you all,

And pray shall, 50

At this trentall

On knees to fall

To the fote ball;

With, fill the blak bowle

For Jayberdes sowle.

*Bibite multum:*

*Ecce sepultrum*

*Sub pede stultum,*

*Asinum, et mulum!*

The deuill kis his *culum!* 60

Wit[h], hey, howe, rumbelowe,

<sup>1</sup> *caput aut ovis*] Ed. "caput caput." I give the conjectural reading of the Rev. J. Mitford. The rhyme suggests (but the metre will not allow) "bidentis."

*Rumpopulorum,  
Per omnia secula seculorum ! Amen.*

*Requiem, &c.*

*Per Fredericum Hely,  
Fratrem de Monte Carmeli,  
Qui condunt sine sale  
Hoc devotum trigintale.  
Vale Jayberd, valde male !*

Adam Vddersall,<sup>1</sup>  
*Alias dictus* Adam all  
a knaue, his  
Epitaph foloweth deuoutly ;  
He was somtime the holy  
Baillvue of Dis.

Of Dis  
*Adam degebat :*  
*dum vixit, falsa gerebat,*

<sup>1</sup> *Vddersall, &c.*] In this passage I have adopted the arrangement proposed by the Rev. J. Mitford.—Ed. thus:

“ Adam Vddersale. alias dictus  
Adam all. a knaue his Epitaph.  
Foloweth deuoutly,  
He was somtime the holy  
baillvue of dis.”



*Namque extorquebat*  
*quicquid nativus habebat,*  
*Aut liber natus ; rapidus*  
*lupus inde vocatus :*  
*Ecclesiamque satus*  
*de Belial iste Pilatus*  
*Sub pede calcatus*  
*violavit, nunc violatus :*  
*Perfidus, iratus,*  
*numquam fuit ille beatus : 10*  
*Uddersall stratus*  
*benedictis est spoliatus,*  
*Improbus, inflatus,*  
*maledictis jam laceratus :*  
*Dis,<sup>1</sup> tibi bacchatus*  
*ballivus prædominatus :*  
*Hic fuit ingratus,*  
*porcus velut insatiatus, 20*  
*Pinguis, crassatus ;*  
*velut Agag sit reprobatus !*  
*Crudehisque Cacus*  
*barathro, peto, sit tumultus !*  
*Belsabub his soule saue,*  
*Qui jacet hic, like a knaue !*  
*Jam scio mortuus est,*  
*Et jacet hic, like a best.*

<sup>1</sup> *Dis, tibi, &c.*] The emendation of the Rev. J. Mitford: compare above, "Baillyue of Dis."—Ed.

"Sis tibi baccatus  
 Balianus prædominatus."

*Anima ejus  
De malo in pejus. Amen.* "

*De Dis hæc semper erit camena,  
Adam Uddersall sit anathema!*

*Auctore Skelton, rectore de Dis.*

*Finis, &c. Apud Trumpinton scriptum per  
Curatum ejusdem, quinto die Januarii Anno  
Domini, secundum computat. Angliæ, MDVII.*

*Adam, Adam, ubi es? Genesis. Re. Ubi nulla  
requies, ubi nullus ordo, sed sempiternus horror  
inhabitat. Job.*

*Diligo rustincum \* cum portant bis duo quointum,  
Et cantant delos est mihi dulce melos.*

1. *Canticum dolorosum.*

LAMENTATIO URBS NORVICEN.

*O lacrymosa lues nimis, O quam flebile fatum !  
Ignibus exosis, urbs veneranda, ruis ;  
Fulmina sive Jovis sive ultima fata vocabant,  
Vulcani rapidis ignibus ipsa peris.  
Ah decus, ah patriæ specie pulcherrima dudum !  
Urbs Norvicensis labitur in cineres.  
Urbs, tibi quid referam ? breviter tibi pauca re-  
ponam :*

*Prospera rara manent, utere sorte tua ;  
Perpetuum mortale nihil, sors omnia versat .  
Urbs miseranda, vale ! sors miseranda tua est.*

Skelton.

\* This and the following piece are from Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1668. In that collection the present couplet is twice printed: "*rustincum*" is the reading of the first copy, "*rusticum*" (which the metre will not admit) of the second: the first copy has "*quointum*," the second "*quintum*;" the Editor of 1786 gave "*quantum*." See notes for the conjectures of the Rev. J. Mitford on this enigma. "*Canticum dolorosum*" is probably part of the title of the next piece.

IN BEDEL, QUONDAM BELIAL INCARNATUM, DEVOTUM  
EPITAPHIUM.

*Ismal, ecce, Bedel, non mel, sed fel, sibi des el!*<sup>1</sup>  
*Perfidus Achitophel, luridus atque lorell;*  
*Nunc olet iste Jebal,*<sup>2</sup> *Nabal. S. Nabal, ecce, ri-*  
*baldus!*

*Omnibus exosus atque perosus erat;*  
*In plateaque cadens animam spiravit oleto:*  
*Presbyteros odiens sic sine mente ruit.*  
*Discite vos omnes quid sit violare sacratos*  
*Presbyteros, quia sic corruit iste canis.*  
*Cocytus cui si detur*<sup>3</sup> *per Tartara totus,*  
*Sit, peto, promotus Cerberus huncque voret.*<sup>10</sup>  
*At mage sanctu tamen mea Musa precabitur atros*  
*Hos lemuresque eat sic Bedel ad superos;*  
*Non eat, immo ruat, non scandat, sed mage tendat,*  
*Inque caput præceps mox Acheronta petat.*

*Bedel. Quanta malignatus est inimicus in sancto!*  
Psa. 73.

*Mortuus est asinus,*  
*Qui pinxit mulum:*

<sup>1</sup> *des el*] The Rev. J. Mitford proposes "dorell."

<sup>2</sup> *Jebal*] Qy. "Jabel?" but I do not understand the line.

<sup>3</sup> *si detur*] So the Rev. J. Mitford reads. Ed. "sic petus."

*Hic jacet barbarus ;*  
*The deuill kys his calum ! Amen.*

*Hanc volo transcribas, transcriptam moxque re-*  
*mittas*

*Pagellam ; quia sunt qui mea scripta sciunt.*

*Redde* { *Igitur quia sunt qui mala cuncta fremunt,*  
          { *Igitur quia sunt qui bona cuncta premunt.*  
          *Nec tamen expaveo de fatuo labio,*  
          *Nec multum paveo de stolido rabulo.*

*Salve plus\* decies quam sunt momenta dierum!*  
*Quot generum species, quot res, quot nomina rerum,*  
*Quot prati flores, quot sunt et in orbe colores,*  
*Quot pisces, quot aves, quot sunt et in æquore*  
*naves,*  
*Quot volucrum pennæ, quot sunt tormenta gehennæ,*  
*Quot cæli stellæ, quot sunt et in orbe puellæ,*  
*Quot sancti Romæ, quot sunt miracula Thomæ,*  
*Quot sunt virtutes, tantas tibi mitto salutes.*

\* From Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568, (where it is printed on the reverse of the title-page,) collated with a copy in Additional MSS. Brit. Mus. (4787, fol. 224,) which is headed "Ex Jo. Skeltono Poeta Laureato."

198 EPITAPHIUM IN HENRICUM SEPTIMUM.

ORATOR REGIUS SKELTONIS LAUREATUS IN SINGULARE  
MERITISSIMUMQUE PRÆCONIUM NOBILISSIMI PRINCIPIS  
HENRICI SEPTIMI, NUPER STRENUISSIMI REGIS ANGLIÆ.  
HOC EPITAPHIUM EDIDIT, AD SINCERAM CONTEMPLA-  
TIONEM REVERENDI IN CHRISTO PATRIS AC DOMINI,  
DOMINI JOHANNIS ISLIPPÆ ABBATIS WESTMONASTERIEN-  
SIS OPTIME MERITI, ANNO DOMINI MDXII. PRIDIE DIVI  
ANDRÆ APOSTOLI, &C. \*

*Tristia Melpomenes cogor modo plectra sonare ,  
Hos elegos foveat Cynthus ille meos.  
Si quas fata movent lacrymas, lacrymarè videtur  
Jam bene maturum, si bene mente sapis.  
Flos Britonum, regum speculum, Salomonis imago,  
Septimus Henricus mole sub hac tegitur.  
Punica, dum regnat, redolens rosa digna vocari,  
Jam jam marcescit, ceu levis umbra fugit.  
Multa novercantis fortunæ, multa faventis  
Passus, et infractus tempus utrumque tulit. 10  
Nobilis Anchises, armis metuendus Atrides,  
Hic erat ; hunc Scottus rex timuit Jacobus.  
Spiramenta animæ vegetans dum vescitur aura,  
Francorum populus conticuit pavidus.*

\* This and the next piece from Marshe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568, collated with the poems as given in *Reges, Regina, Nobiles, et alii in Ecclesia Collegiata B. Petri Westmonasterii sepulti*, &c., 1603, 4to.

*Immensas sibi divitias cumulasse quid horres?  
 Nî cumulasset opes, forte, Britanne, luas.  
 Urgentes casus tacita si mente volutes,  
 Vix tibi sufficeret aurea ripa Tagi.  
 Nî sua te probitas consulla mente laborans  
 Rexissit satius, vix tibi tuta salus. 20  
 Sed quid plura cano? meditans quid plura voluto?  
 Quisque vigil sibi sit: mors sine lege rapit.  
 Ad Dominum, qui cuncta regit, pro principe tanto  
 Funde preces quisquis carmina nostra legis.*

*Vel mage,\* si placeat, hunc timuit Jacobus,  
 Scottorum dominus, qui sua fata luit;  
 Quem Leo Candidior Rubeum necat ense Leonem,  
 Et jacet usque modo non tumultatus humo.  
 Refrigerii sedem, quietis beatitudinem, luminis  
 habeat claritatem. Amen.*

---

EULOGIUM PRO SUORUM TEMPORUM CONDITIONE, TANTIS  
 PRINCIPIBUS NON INDIGNUM, PER SKELTONIDA  
 LAUREATUM, ORATOREM REGIUM.

*Huc, pia Calliope, propera, mea casta puella,  
 Et mecum resona carmina plena deo.*

\* *humo*] Not in *Reges*, &c. These lines (containing an allusion to the battle of Flodden) are of a later date than the preceding poem, to the 12th verse of which they are intended as a sort of note. This is not the only passage in our author's Latin pieces where two pentameters occur without an intervening hexameter: see conclusion of *The Garlande of Laurell*.



*Septimus Henricus, Britonum memorabilis heros,  
 Anglica terra, tuus magnanimus Priamus,  
 Attalus hic opibus, rigidus Cato, clarus Acestes,  
 Sub gelido clausus marmore jam recubat.  
 Sic honor omnis, opes, probitas, sic gloria regum,  
 Omnia nutabunt mortis ad imperium.  
 Anglia, num lacrymas? rides; lacrymare quid  
 obstas?*

*Dum vixit, lacrymas; dum moritur, jubilas. 10  
 Canta, tamen penses, dum vixerat, Angligenenses  
 Vibrabant enses, bella nec ulla timent.  
 Undique bella fremunt nunc, undique praelia  
 surgunt:*

*Noster honor solus, filius, ecce, suus!  
 Noster honor solus, qui pondera tanta subire  
 Non timet, intrepidus arma gerenda vocat;  
 Arma gerenda vocat, (superi sua cœpta secun-  
 dent!)*

*Ut quatiat Pallas ægida sæpe rogat.  
 Sors tamen est versanda diu, sors ultima belli:  
 Myrmidonum dominus Marte silente ruit; 20  
 Et quem non valuit validis superare sub armis  
 Mars, tamen occubuit insidiis Paridis.*

*Nos incerta quidem pro certis ponere rebus  
 Arguit, et prohibet Delius ipse pater.  
 Omnia sunt hominum dubio labentia fato,  
 Marte sub incerto militat omnis homo.*

*Omne decus nostrum, nostra et spes unica  
 tantum,  
 Jam bene qui regnat, hunc Jovis umbra tegat!*

*Ut quamvis mentem labor est inhibere volentem,  
Pauca tamen liceat dicere pace sua :      30  
Pace tua liceat mihi nunc tibi dicere pauca,  
Dulce meum decus, et sola Britannia salus.  
Summa rei nostræ remanet, celeberrime princeps,  
In te præcipuo, qui modo sceptrum geris.  
Si tibi fata favent, faveant precor atque precabor,  
Anglia, tunc plaude ; sin minus, ipsa vale.*

*Polychronitudo basileos.*

## TETRASTICHON VERITATIS.

*Felix qui bustum formasti, rex, tibi cuprum ;  
Auro si tectus fueras, fueras spoliatus,  
Nudus, prostratus, tanta est rabiosa cupido  
Undique nummorum : rex, pace precor requiescas.  
Amen.*

SKELTON LAUREATE AGAINST THE  
SCOTTES.\*

AGAINST the prowde Scottes clatteryng,  
That neuer wyll leaue theyr tratlynge :  
Wan they the felde, and lost theyr kynge?  
They may well say, fye on that wynnynge!

Lo, these fonde sottes  
And tratlynge Scottes,  
How thei are blynde  
In theyr owne mynde,  
And wyll not know  
Theyr ouerthrow  
At Branxton more!  
They are so stowre,  
So frantyke mad,  
They say they had  
And wan the felde  
With spere and shelde:

\* The following pieces, called forth by the battle of Flodden, and the lines on the Battle of the Spurs annexed to them, are from the ed of Kynge and Marche of *Certaine booke compiled by mayster Skelton*, n. d., collated with the same work, ed. Day, n. d., ed. Lant, n. d., and with Marabe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568.

That is as trew  
 As blacke is blew  
 And grene is gray.  
 What euer they say,  
 Jemmy is ded  
 And closed in led,  
 That was theyr owne kyng:  
 Fy on that wynnynge!

At Floddon hyllys  
 Our bowys, our byllys,  
 Slewe all the floure  
 Of theyr honoure.  
 Are not these Scottys  
 Fols and sottys,  
 Suche boste to make,  
 To prate and crake,  
 To face, to brace,  
 All voyde of grace,  
 So prowde of hart,  
 So ouerthwart,  
 So out of frame,  
 So voyde of shame,  
 As it is enrolde,  
 Wrytten and tolde  
 Within this quayre?  
 Who lyst to repayre,  
 And therin reed,  
 Shall fynde indeed  
 A mad rekenynge,  
 Consyderynge al thyng,

That the Scottis may synge  
Fy on the wynnynge!

*When the Scotte lyued.*

Joly Jemmy, ye scorneful Scot,  
Is it come vnto your lot  
A solempne sumner for to be?  
It greyth nought for your degre  
Our kynge of Englande for to syght,  
Your souerayne lord, our prynce of might:  
Ye for to sende such a citacion,  
It shameth all your noughty nacion,  
In comparyson but kynge Koppynge  
Vnto our prince, annoynted kynge.  
Ye play Hob Lobbyn of Lowdean;  
Ye shew ryght well what good ye can;  
Ye may be lorde of Locrian,—  
Chryst sence you with a frying pan! —  
Of Edingborrow and Saint Ionis towne:  
Adieu, syr sumner, cast of youre crowne!

*When the Scot was slayne.*

Continually I shall remember  
The mery moneth of September,  
With the ix<sup>1</sup> daye of the same,  
For then began our myrth and game;  
So that now I haue deuysed,  
And in my minde I haue comprysed,

Of the prowde Scot, kynge Jemmy,  
 To wryte some lyttle tragedy,  
 For no maner consyderacion  
 Of any sorowful lamentacion,  
 But for the special consolacion  
 Of all our royall Englysh nacion.

Melpomone, O Muse tragediall,  
 Vnto your grace for grace now I call,  
 To guyde my pen and my pen to enbybe!  
 Illumyn me, your poete and your scribe,      \*  
 That with myxture of aloes and bytter gall  
 I may compounde confectures for a cordiall,  
 To angre the Scottes and Irysh keteringes withall,  
 That late were discomfect with battayle marcyall.

Thalia, my Muse, for you also call I,  
 To touche them with tauntes of your armony,  
 A medley to make of myrth with sadnes,  
 The hartes of England to comfort with gladnes:  
 And now to begyn I wyll me adres,  
 To you rehersynge the somme of my proces.      \*

Kynge Jamy, Jemmy, Jocky my jo,  
 Ye summond our kynge, — why dyd ye so?  
 To you nothing it dyd accorde  
 To summon our kynge, your soueraygne lord.  
 A kyng, a sumner! it was great wonder:  
 Know ye not suger and salt asonder?  
 Your sumner to saucy, to malapert,  
 Your harrold in armes not yet halfe experte.  
 Ye thought ye dyd yet valyauntly,  
 Not worth thre skypes of a pye:

Syr skyrgalyard, ye were so skyt,  
Your wyll than ran before your wyt.  
Your lege ye layd and your aly,  
Your frantick fable not worth a fly,  
Frenche kynge, or one or other;  
Regarded ye should your lord, your brother.  
Trowid ye, Syr Jemy, his nobul grace  
From you, Syr Scot, would turne his face?  
With, Gup, Syr Scot of Galawey!  
Now is your pryde fall to decay.  
Male vryd was your fals entent  
For to offende your presydent,  
Your souerayne lord most reuerent,  
Your lord, your brother, and your regent.

110

In him is figured Melchisedec,  
And ye were disloyall Amalec.  
He is our noble Scipione,  
Annoynted kynge; and ye were none,  
Thoughe ye vntruly your father haue slayne.  
His tittle is true in Fraunce to raygne;  
And ye, proud Scot, Dundee, Dunbar,  
Pardy, ye were his homager,  
And suter to his parliament:  
For your vntruth now ar ye shent.  
Ye bare yourselfe somewhat to bold,  
Therefore ye lost your copyehold;  
Ye were bonde tenent to his estate;  
Lost is your game, ye are checkmate.

120

Vnto the castell of Norram,  
I vnderstande, to sone ye came.

130

At Braxston more and Flodden hylles,  
Our Englysh bowes, our Englysh bylles,  
Agaynst you gaue so sharpe a shower,  
That of Scotland ye lost the flower.  
The Whyte Lyon, there rampaunt of moode,  
He ragyd and rent out your hart bloode;  
He the Whyte, and ye the Red,  
The Whyte there slew the Red starke ded.  
Thus for your guerdon quyt ar ye,

Thanked be God in Trinite,  
And swete Sainct George, our ladies knyght!  
Your eye is out; adew, good nyght!

140

Ye were starke mad to make a fray,  
His grace beyng out of the way:  
But, by the power and might of God,  
For your owne tayle ye made a rod.  
Ye wanted wit, syr, at a worde;  
Ye lost your spurres, ye lost your sworde.  
Ye myght haue buskyd you to Huntley bankys;  
Your pryde was peuysh to play such prankys:  
Your pouerte coude not attayne  
With our kyng royal war to mayntayne.

Of the kyng of Nauerne ye might take heed,  
Vngraciously how he doth speed:  
In double delynge so he did dreame,  
That he is kyng without a reme;  
And, for example ye would none take,  
Experiens hath brought you in suche a brake.  
Your welth, your ioy, your sport, your play,  
Your bragyng bost, your royal aray,

150



Your beard so brym as bore at bay,  
 Your Seuen Systers, that gun so gay,  
 All haue ye lost and cast away.  
 Thus fortune hath tourned you, I dare well  
     saye,

Now from a kynge to a clot of clay :  
 Out of your robes ye were shaken,  
 And wretchedly ye lay starke naked.  
 For lacke of grace hard was your hap :  
 The Popes curse gaue you that clap.  
 Of the out yles the roughe foted Scottes, 170  
 We haue well eased them of the bottles :  
 The rude ranke Scottes, lyke dronken dranes,  
 At Englysh bowes haue fetched theyr banes.  
 It is not fytyng<sup>1</sup> in tower and towne  
 A sumner to were a kynges crowne :  
 Fortune on you therfore did frowne ;  
 Ye were to hye, ye are cast downe.  
 Syr sumner, now where is your crowne ?  
 Cast of your crowne, cast vp your crowne !  
 Syr sumner, now ye haue lost your crowne. 180  
     Quod Skelton laureate, oratoure to the  
     Kynges most royall estate.

*Scotia, redacta in formam provinciae,  
 Regis parebit nutibus Angliæ :  
 Alioquin, per desertum Sin, super cherubim,  
 Cherubin, seraphim, seraphinque, ergo, &c.*

<sup>1</sup>fytyng] Other eds. "sytying" and "sitting," which, perhaps, Skelton wrote, as he elsewhere uses the word.

VETO DIUERS PEOPLE THAT REMORD THIS RYMINGE  
 AGAYNST THE SCOT JEMMY.

I AM now constrayned,  
 With wordes nothyng fayned,  
 This inuectiue to make,  
 For some peoples sake  
 That lyst for to iangyll  
 And waywardly to wrangyll  
 Agaynst this my makynge,  
 Their males therat shakynge,  
 At it reprehending,  
 And venemously stingynge,  
 Rebukynge and remordynge,  
 And nothing according.

10

Cause haue they none other,  
 But for that he was brother,  
 Brother vnnatural  
 Vnto our kynge royall,  
 Against whom he dyd fighte  
 Falsly agaynst all ryght,  
 Lyke that vntrue rebell  
 Fals Kayn agaynst Abell.

20

Who so therat pyketh mood,  
 The tokens are not good  
 To be true Englysh blood;  
 For, yf they vnderstood  
 His traytourly dispyght,  
 He was a recrayed knyght,

A subtyll sysmatyke,  
Ryght nere an heretyke,  
Of grace out of the state,  
And died excomunycate.

30

And for he was a kynge,  
The more shamefull rekenynge  
Of hym should men report,  
In earnest and in sport.  
He skantly loueth our kynge,  
That grudgeth at this thing :  
That cast such ouerthwartes  
Percase haue hollow hartes.

*Si veritatem dico, quare non creditis mihi :*

CHORUS DE DIS CONTRA SCOTTOS CUM OMNI PROCESSIONALI  
FESTIVITATE SOLEMNISAVIT HOC EPITOMA XXII  
DIE SEPTEMBRIS, &C.

*Salve, festa dies, toto resonabilis ævo,  
Qua Scottus Jacobus, obrutus ense, cadit.  
Barbara Scottorum gens, perfida, plena malorum,  
Vincitur ad Norram, vertitur inque fugam.  
Vasta palus, sed campestris, (borie memoratur  
Braxton more), Scottis terra perosa fuit.  
Scottica castra fremunt Floddun sub montibus  
altis,  
Quæ valide invadens dissipat Angla manus.  
Millia Scottorum trusit gens Anglica passim;  
Luxuriat tepido sanguine pinguis humus: 10  
Pars animas miseri miseras misere sub umbras,  
Pars ruit in foveas, pars subiit latebras.  
Jam quid agit Jacobus, damnorum germine cretus?  
Perfidus ut Nemroth, lapsus ad ima ruit.  
Dic modo, Scottorum dudum male sane malorum  
Rector, nunc regeris, mortuus, ecce, jaces!  
Sic Leo te rapidus, Leo Candidus, inclytus ursit,  
Quo Leo tu Rubeus ultima fata luis.  
Anglia, duc choreas; resonent tua tympana,  
psallas; 1  
Da laudes Domino, da pia vota Deo. 20  
Hæc laureatus Skeltonis, regius orator.*

<sup>1</sup> *tympana, psallas*] Qy. "tympana psalmis?"

CHORUS DE DIS, &C. SUPER TRIUMPHALI VICTORIA CONTRA  
GALLOS, &C. CANTAVIT SOLEMNITER HOC ELOGIUM IN  
PROFESTO DIVI JOHANNIS AD DECOLLATIONEM.

*Salve, festa dies, toto memorabilis ævo,  
Qua rex Henricus Gallica bella premit.  
Henricus rutilans Octavus noster in armis  
Tirwinnae gentis mœnia stravit humi.  
Sceptryger Anglorum bello validissimus Hector,  
Francorum gentis colla superba terit.  
Dux armis nuper celebris, modo dux inermis,  
De Longville modo dic quo tua pompa ruit?  
De Otermount clarus dudum dic, Galle superbe,  
Unde superbus eris? carcere nonne gemis? »  
Discite Francorum gens cætera capta, Britannum  
Noscite magnanimum, subdite vosque sibi.  
Gloria Cappadocis, divæ milesque Mariæ,  
Ilius hic sub ope Gallica regna reget.  
Hoc insigne bonum, divino numine gestum,  
Anglica gens referat semper, ovansque canat.  
Per Skeltonida laureatum, oratorem regium.*

VILITISSIMUS<sup>1</sup> SCOTUS DUNDAS ALLEGAT CAUDAS CONTRA  
ANGLIGENAS.

*Caudatos Anglos, spurcissime Scots, quid effers?  
Effrons es, quoque sons, mendax, tua spurcague  
bucca est.*

*Anglicus a tergo  
caudam gerit;  
est canis ergo.  
Anglice caudate,  
cape caudam  
ne cadat a te.  
Ex causa caudæ  
manet Anglica  
gens sine laude.*

*Diffamas patriam, qua non  
est melior usquam.  
Cum cauda plaudis dum  
possis, ad ostia pultas  
Mendicans; mendicus eris,  
mendaxque bilinguis,*

<sup>1</sup> *Vilitissimus*] So, perhaps, Skelton wrote; but qy. "Vilitissimus?"—This poem from Marthe's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568.

*Scabidus, horribilis, quem  
vermes sexque pedales  
Corrodunt misere ; miseris  
genus est maledictum.*

*Skelton, nobilis poeta.*

Gup, Scot,  
Ye blot :  
*Laudate*  
*Caudate,*  
Set in better  
Thy pentameter.  
This Dundas,  
This Scottishe as,  
He rymes and railes  
That Englishmen haue tailes.

10

*Skeltonus laureatus,*  
*Anglicus natus,*  
*Provocat Musas*  
*Contra Dundas*  
*Spurcissimum Scotum,*  
*Undique notum,*  
*Rustice fotum,*  
*Vapide potum.*

Skelton laureat  
After this rate  
Defendeth with his pen  
All Englysh men  
Agayn Dundas,  
That Scottishe asse.

20

Shake thy tayle, Scot, lyke a cur,  
 For thou beggest at euery mannes dur :  
 Tut, Scot, I sey,  
 Go shake thy <sup>1</sup> dog, hey !  
 Dundas of Galaway  
 With thy versyfyeng rayles 20  
 How they haue tayles.  
 By Jesu Christ,  
 Fals Scot, thou lvest :  
 But behynd in our hose  
 We bere there a rose  
 For thy Scottyshe nose,  
 A spectacle case  
 To couer thy face,  
 With tray deux ase.  
 A tolman to blot, 40  
 A rough foted Scot !  
 Dundas, sir knaue,  
 Why doste thou deprauē  
 This royall reame,  
 Whose radiant beame  
 And relucēt light  
 Thou hast in despite,  
 Thou donghyll knyght ?  
 But thou lakest might,  
 Dundas, dronken and drowsy, 50  
 Skabed, scuruy, and lowsy,  
 Of vnhappy generacion  
 And most vngracious nacion.

<sup>1</sup> thy] Qy. "thé ?" but see notes.



Dundas,  
That dronke asse,  
That ratis and rankis,  
That prates and pranke  
On Huntley bankes,  
Take this our thankes ;  
Dunde, Dunbar,  
Walke, Scot,  
Walke, sot,  
Rayle not to far.

..

ELEGIA IN SERENISSIMÆ PRINCIPIS ET DOMINÆ, DOMINÆ  
MARGARETÆ NUPER COMITISSÆ DE DERBY, STRENUISSIMI  
REGIS HENRICI SEPTIMI MATRIS, FUNEBRE MINISTERIUM,  
PER SKELTONIDA LAUREATUM, ORATOREM REGIUM, XVI.  
DIE MENSIS AUGUSTI, ANNO SALUTIS MDXVI. \*

*Aspirate meis elegis, pia turma sororum,  
Et Margaretam collacrymate piam.  
Hac sub mole latet regis celeberrima mater  
Henrici magni, quem locus iste fovet ;  
Quem locus iste sacer celebri celebrat polyandro,  
Illius en genitrix hac tumulatur humo !  
Cui cedat Tanaquil ( Titus hanc super astra re-  
portet ),  
Cedat Penelope, carus Ulixis amor :  
Huic Abigail, velut Hester, erat pietate secunda :  
En tres jam proceres nobilitate pares !  
Pro domina, precor, implora, pro principe tanta  
Flecte Deum precibus, qui legis hos apices.  
Plura referre piget, calamus torpore rigescit,  
Dormit Mecænas, negligitur probitas ;  
Nec juvat, aut modicum prodest, nunc ultima versu  
Fata recensere ( mortua mors reor est ).*

\* From Marsha's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568, collated with the piece as given in *Reges, Regina, Nobiles, et alii in Ecclesia Collegiata B. Petri Westmonasterii sepulti, &c.*, 1603, 4to.

*Quæris quid decus est? decus est modo dicier  
hircus;*

*Cedit honos hirco, cedit honorque capro.  
Falleris ipse Charon; iterum surrexit Abyron,  
Et Stygios remos despicit ille tuos.* 20

*Vivitur ex voto: mentis præcordia tangunt  
Nulla sepulcra ducum, nec monumenta patrum;  
Non regum, non ulla hominum labentia fato  
Tempora, nec totiens mortua turba ruens.  
Hinc statuo certe perituræ parcere chartæ,  
Ceu Juvenalis avet eximius satirus.*

*Distichon execrationis in phagolædoros.*

*Qui lacerat, violatve rapit præsens epitoma,  
Hunc laceretque voret Cerberus absque mora!*

*Calon, agaton, cum areta. Re. in pa.  
Hanc tecum statuas dominam, precor, O sator orbis,  
Quo regnas rutilans rex sine fine manens!*

WHY were ye *Calliope* embrawdred with letters  
of golde? \*

SKELTON LAUREATE, ORATO. REG. MAKETH THIS  
AUNSWERE, &c.

CALLIOPE,  
As ye may se,  
Regent is she  
Of poetes al,  
Whiche gaue to me  
The high degre  
Laureat to be  
Of fame royall;  
Whose name enrolde  
With silke and golde  
I dare be bolde  
Thus for to were.  
Of her I holde  
And her housholde;  
Though I waxe olde  
And somdele sere,  
Yet is she fayne,

10

\* These pieces on Calliope from Marshe's ed. of Skelton's  
*Workes*, 1568.

Voyde of disdayn,  
 Me to retayne  
 Her seruiture :  
 With her certayne  
 I wyll remayne,  
 As my souerayne  
 Moost of pleasure,  
*Maulgre touz malheureux.*

20

## LATINUM CARMEN SEQUITUR.

*Cur tibi contexta est aurea Calliope ?*

## RESPONSIO EJUSDEM VATIS.

*Candida Calliope, vatum regina, coronans  
 Pierios lauro, radiante intexta sub auro !  
 Hanc ego Pierius tanto dignabor honore,  
 Dum mihi vita manet, dum spiritus hos regit artus :  
 Quamquam conficior senio marcescoque sensim,  
 Ipse tamen gestare sua hæc pia pignora certo,  
 Assensuque suo placidis parebo camenis.  
 Inclyta Calliope, et semper mea maxima cura est.*

*Hæc Pierius omni Spartano liberior.*

## CALLIOPE,

*Musarum excellentissima, speciosissima, formosis-  
 sima, heroicis præest versibus.*

## THE BOKE OF THREE FOOLLES.\*

M. SKELTON, POETE LAUREATE, GAUE TO MY LORD  
CARDYNALL.

## THE FYRST FOOLE.

THE man that doth wed a wyfe  
For her goodes and her rychesse,  
And not for lygnage femynatyfe,  
Procureth doloure and dystresse,  
With infynyte payne and heuynesse ;  
For she wyll do hym moche sorowe,  
Bothe at eyn and at morowe.

## THE SECONDE FOOLE.

The dartes ryght cursed of Enuye  
Hath rayned sythe the worlde began,  
Whiche bryngeth man euydently  
Into the bondes of Sathan ;  
Wherfore he is a dyscrete man  
That can eschewe that euyll synne  
Where body and soule is lost in.

## THE THYRD FOOLE.

Dyuers by voluptuousnes  
Of women, the which be present,

\* From Marsha's ed. of Skelton's *Workes*, 1568.

Be brought into full great dystres,  
Forgettyng vertues excellent  
Of God, the whych is permanent,  
And suffreth themselfe to be bounde  
In cordes, as it were a hounde.

Come hyther, and take this boke, and rede therein for your lernyng with clere iyen, and loke in this boke, that sheweth you folysh fooles without wyt or vnderstanding. Pecunyous fooles, that bee auaryce, and for to haue good tyme and to lyue meryly, weddeth these olde wyddred women, whych hath sakes full of nobles, claryfye here your syghte, and ye shal know what goodnes commeth therby, and what joye and gladnes. Some there be that habandoneth themselfe for to gather togyther the donge that yssueth oute of theyr asses arse, for to fynde euermore grese: it is grete foly trulye; but yet the yonge man is more folyssher the whiche weddeth an olde wyfe, for to haue her golde and syluer. I say that he is a great foole that taketh anne olde wyfe for her goodes, and is much to blame.

They the whiche do so procureth all trybulations; for with her he shall neither haue ioy, recreacion, nor rest. He noryssheth stryfes and greate debates, thoughte, payne, anguyshe, and melancoly: and yf he wolde accomplysshe the workes of maryage, hee may not, for shee is so debylyte, colde, vnpropyce, vnnaturall, and vndys-

currente, for the coldenes that is in her. The husbände of this olde wyfe hath none esporaunce to haue lygnage by her, for he neuer loued her. The man is a verye foole to make his demoraunce vpon such an olde wife. Whan he thinketh sometime vpon such thynges, he leseth his naturall wit, in cursynge hymselfe more then a m. tymes with the golde and the syluer, and the cursed hasarde of Fortune. And when he seeth his poore lyfe in suche dystresse, his hert is all oppressed with melancoly and dolour: but whan the vnhappye man seeth that it is force, and that hee is constrained to haue pacience, he putteth his cure to draw to hym the money of the olde wyddred woman in makynge to her glade chere. And whan hee hath the money and the bagge with nobles, God knoweth what chere he maketh, wythoute thynkinge on them that gathered it. And when he hath spent al, he is more vnhappyer than hee was before. Yf that the foole be vnhappye, it is well ryghte, for hee hath wedded auaryce, mother of all euylles: yf hee had taken a wyfe that had ben fayre and yonge, after his complection, he had not fallen into so great an inconuenience. It is wryten in auncient bokes, that hee whiche weddeth a wyfe by auaryce, and not for to haue lygnage, hath no cure of the honestie of matrymonye, and thynketh full euyll on his conscience. The vnyn of maryage is decayed; for, vnder the coloure of good and loyall maryage, is wedded auaryce, as



we se euery day by experience through the world. And one wil haue a wife, and that hee marke his to be demaunded in maryage, they will enquiryre of his ryches and conninge. And on the other syde he wyl demaunde great goodes with her, to norysshe her with: for and her father and mother and frendes haue no greate ryches, he wyll not of her; but and she be ryche, hee demaundeth none other thyng. It is written, that one were better haue his house in deserte, whereas no mencion shoulde be of hym, thenne to bide with suche wyues, for they be replete with all cursdnes. And the pore foole breketh his hearte; he loseth his soule, and corrompeth his body. He selleth his youth vnto the olde wife that weddeth her for auaryce, and hath but noyse and discention, in vsyng his lyfe thus in synne. Consydre, you fooles, what seruytude ye put your self in, when ye wedde such wyues. I pray you be chast, if that ye wyll lyue without vnhap. My frends, whiche be not in that bande, put you not therin, and yee shalbe well happy. Notwithstanding, I defende you not to mary, but I exhorte you to take a wyfe that ye may haue progeny by, and solace bodely and gostly, and thereby to wyn the ioyes of Paradyse.

## OF ENUYE, THE SECONDE FOOLE.

Approche, you folyshe enuyous, the which can say no good by them that ye hate, come and se in this booke youre peruerse and euyll condicions.

O Enuy, that deuoureth the condicions of men, and dyssypers of honour! Thou makest to haue rauisshynge heartes famyshed; thou brennest the desyres, and sleeth the soule in the ende; thou engendrest the darte enuyronned with mischefe, that whiche traueyleth diuers folkes. Cursed foole, howe haste thou thy heart so replete with cruelte? for, if I haue temporall goodes, thou wilt haue enuye therat; or, if that I can worke well, and that I apply mee vnto dyuers thynges the whiche be honest, or if that I haue castels, landes, and tenementes, or if that I am exalted vnto honoure by my science, or won it by my hardynes truely and iustlye, or if that I am beloued of dyuers persons whiche reclaymeth mee good and vertuous and of a noble courage, thou wylt vilepende me with thy wordes: thou wottest neuer in what maner thou mayst adnychell mine honour. Thy malicious hert is hurt with a mortall wounde, in such wise that thou haste no ioye nor solace in this world, for the darte of Enuye perceth thy herte lyke a spere. Thou hast wylde lycoure, the whiche maketh all thy stomacke to be on a flambe. There is no medicyne that maye hele thy mortall wounde. I, beyng in a place where as myne honoure was magnifyed, thoughte for to haue taken alyaunce with an odyfferaunt floure, but all sodaynely I was smyten with a darte of Enuye behinde my backe, wherthroughe all tho that were on my partye turned theyr

backes vpon me, for to agree to one of Venus dissolate seruantes, procedynge frome a hearte enuenuymed with enuye. Wherefore I shall specifye vnto you the condycions of the enuyous. Who that holdeth hym of the subiectes of Enuye, she constytueth to deuoure and byte euery bodye; gyuyng vnhappes and myseryes vnto her seruantes. Suche folkes doth the innocente a thousande wronges. They be replenysshed with so many treasons, that they can not slepe in their beddes; they haue no swete canticles nor songes. They haue theyr tonges honyed with swete words vnder the coloure of loue; they be lene, and infecte of rygoure these enuyous, more bytterer thenne the gall of the fyshe glauca, wyth theyr eyen beholdinge a trauers, of stomackes chaufed syntillously, and without their mouthes, as the vyne that is newe cut, they be enuyroned with rage and greate anguysshe, beholdynge euermore to destroy some body. Conceyue the history of Joseph in your myndes, the which had vii. brethren, that were enuyous against him which was the yongeste, and solde hym vnto the marchauntes of Egypte by enuy, and betrayed him; the which were delybered of a longe time to haue destroyed him. These enuious neuer laughe but whan some good man hath damage vpon the see or lande; or at the disfortune of some body, he drynketh his bloud as milke. Notwithstandinge his heart is euer embraced with enuy, and as longe

as he lyueth it shall gnawe his hert. Hee resembleth vnto Ethna whiche brenneth alwayes. As of Romulus, and Remus his brother, the whiche Romulus edefyed first Rome, and gaue it to name Rome, after his owne name. Neuertheles they were pastours, for they establyshed lawes in the citie. And Romulus punished euerye body egally. He dyd instytute lymittes or markes aboute the citie, and ordeyned that he that passed the lymyttes shuld be put to death. His brother passed them, wherfore he was put vnto death incontinente in the same place. Wee rede also how Cayme slewe his owne brother by enuye. Haue we not ensample semblablye of Atreus, of whom his brother occupied the parke, howe well that they were in the realme stronge and puyssaunte, for to defende them? It was Thesius that expulsed his brother oute of the realme by enuy, and was called agayne bycause that he had taken the parke, and fynally was banyshed, and by enuye and vnder the colour of peace he was sent for. And when hee was commen vnto a feast, he made his two children for to be rested, and made them to drynke their bloude. O what horroure was it to see his twoo children dye that were so dyscrete! In lykewise Ethiocles by his brethren receyued great enormyties by that cursed Enuye. O thou prudent man, if thou wilt be discrete, good, and wise, flye from Enuy, and thou shalt finde thy selfe sounde of body and soule!

OF THE VOLUPTUOUSNES CORPORALL, THE THIRD  
FOOLE.

Ryghte heartely I beseche you, folysshe and lecherous people, that it will please you for to come and make a litell collacion in this booke; and if there be any thinge that I can do for you, I am all yours both body and goodes; for truelye I haue an ardaunte desyre to doo you some meritorious<sup>1</sup> dede, bicause that I haue euer frequented your seruyce.

Nowe herken what I haue found you, cautellous women. They that the pappes be sene all naked, their heyre combed and trussed in dyuers places merueylously, be vnreasonable fooles, for they dresse theim like voluptuous harlottes, that make their heyre to appere at theyr browes, yalow as fine golde, made in lytel tresses for to drawe yonge folke to theyr loue. Some, for to haue their goodes, presenteth to theim their beddes for to take their carnall desires; and after that they haue taken all their disportes, they pill theim as an onion. The other, for to haue their plesures mondayne, cheseth theim that she loueth best, and maketh sygnyfyauce to theim, sayeng that she is anamoured on theim. Thou art a verye idyot so to abandone thy selfe vnto the vyle synne of lecherye, for thou lettest thy selfe be wrapped

<sup>1</sup> *meritorious*] ed. "meditorious." C.

therein, lyke as a calfe or a shepe is bounde in a corde, in suche wise that ye can not vnhynde youre selfe. O foole, haue aspecte vnto that whiche thou commyttest! for thou putttest thy poore soule in great daunger of damnation eternall; thou putttest thy goodes, thyne vnderstandinge, and thy ioy, vnto dolorous perdition: and for all that yee bee in your wor[l]dly pleasures, yet it is mengled with dystres or with mysery, greate thoughte or melancoly. I requyre thee, leue thy wor[l]dly pleasures, that endureth no lenger then the grasse of the feelde. Yf you haue ioye one only momente, thou shalt haue twayne of sorow for it. Wee rede of Sardanapalus, that for his lecherye and lybidinosite fell into hell; the whiche put him selfe in the guise of a poore woman: his men, seinge hym so obstinate in that vile sinne, slewe him, and so fynished hee his dayes for folowinge of his pleasaunce mondayne. The soueraigne Creatour was more puyssante thenne this wretched sinner. Let vs not apply our selfe therto, sith that hee punysheth sinners so asprely; but with all our hertes enforce we our selfe for to resist againste that vyle and abhomynable sinne of lechery, the whiche is so full of enfeccion and bytternes, for it distayneth the soule of man. Fle frome the foolisshe women, that pylleth the louers vnto the harde bones, and you shal be beloued of God and also of the worlde.

*Honorificatissimo,\* amplissimo, longeque reverendissimo in Christo patri, ac domino, domino Thomæ, &c. tituli sanctæ Cecilie, sacrosanctæ Romanæ ecclesiæ presbytero, Cardinali meritissimo, et apostolicæ sedis legato, a latereque legato superillustri, &c., Skeltonis laureatus, ora. reg., humillimum dicit obsequium cum omni debita reverentia, tanto tamque magnifico digna principe sacerdotum, totiusque justitiæ æquabilissimo moderatore, necnon præsentis opusculi fautore excellentissimo, &c., ad cujus auspicatissimam contemplationem, sub memorabili prelo gloriôsæ immortalitatis, præsens pagella felicitatur, &c.*

A REPLYCACION AGAYNST CERTAYNE YONG SCOLERS  
ABIURED OF LATE, &c.

*Argumentum.*

*Crassantes nimium, nimium sterilesque labruscas,  
Vinea quas Domini Sabaot non sustinet ultra  
Laxius expandi, nostra est resecare voluntas.*

*Cum privilegio a rege indulto.*

\* The portion of this piece given on the present page forms the title-page of the original edition by Pynson, n. d.

Protestacion alway canonically prepensed, professed, and with good delyberacion made, that this lytell pamphilet, called the Replicacion of Skelton laureate, ora. reg., remordyng dyuers recrayed and moche vuresonable errorrs of certayne sophystycate scolers and rechelesse yonge heretykes lately abiured, &c. shall euermore be, with all obsequious redynesse, humbly submytted vnto the ryght discrete reformacyon of the reuerende prelates and moche noble doctours of our mother holy Church, &c.

*Ad aliam Universitatem Cantabrigensem, &c.*

*Eulogium consolationis.*

*Alma parens O Cantabrigensis,  
Cur lacrymaris? Esto, tui sint  
Degeneres hi filii, sed  
Non ob inertes, O pia mater,  
Insciolos vel decolor esto.  
Progenies non nobilis omnis,  
Quam tua forsam mamma fovebat.  
Tu tamen esto Palladis almæ  
Gloria pollens plena Minervæ,  
Dum radiabunt astra polorum:  
Jamque valet, meque foveto,  
Namque tibi quondam carus alumnus eram.*

Cantabrigia  
Skeltonidi  
laureato pri-  
mam mam-  
mam erudi-  
tionis pien-  
tissime pro-  
pinavit.



*Zebub musca inflativa  
sibilans ab austro, quæ  
intumescere facit hæresi-  
archas contra fidem or-  
thodoxam, &c. h. il.  
Eruditionis exordium in  
tenera audacique juven-  
ta temperatæ moderationis  
frenum postulat. Alio-  
quin scientia effrenata in-  
flataque spu-  
ma elationis, quod dulce venenum est, subtiliter intoxicat interimitque  
incantum possessorem suum, &c. h. il. Non sit igitur tibi, Philologia,  
ratione intemperatæ loquacitatis suæ, inordinate dicacitatis, incogi-  
tatæ prociuitatis, in singulum et scrupulum cordis tui, &c. h. il.  
Eloquentiam sine sapientia prodesse nunquam, obesse pierumque, sa-  
tis constat evidenter i. veterum rhetoris.*

How yong scolers nowe a dayes en-  
bolned with the flyblowen blast of the  
moche vayne glorious pipplyng wynde,  
whan they haue delectably lycked a  
lytell of the lycorous electuary of lusty  
lernyng, in the moche studious scole-  
hous of scrupulous Philology, countyng  
them selfe clerkes exellently enformed  
and transcendingly sped in moche high  
connyng, and whan they haue ones su-  
perciliusly caught

*Rhetorica-  
ri incompo-  
site, logicari  
meticulose,  
philosophari  
perfunctorie,  
theologiari  
phrenetice,  
argui: in  
concionatore  
nedum luci-  
dum inter-  
vallum, sed  
continuum  
pertinacem-  
que mentis  
alienationem,  
feculentam,  
amurcatam, tem-  
ulentam, &c.  
hæc il. Vos  
ergo ele-  
phantice  
evangelizan-  
tes, tanquam*

A lytell ragge of rethorike,  
A lesse lumpe of logyke,  
A pece or a patche of philosophy,  
Than forthwith by and by  
They tumble so in theology,  
Drowned in dregges of diuinite,  
That they iuge them selfe able to be  
Doctours of the chayre in the Uyntre  
At the Thre Cranes,  
To magnifye their names :  
But madly it frames,  
For all that they preche and teche  
Is farther than their wytte wyll reche.  
Thus by demeryttes of their abusyon,

Finally they fall to carefull confusyon,  
To beare a fagot, or to be enflamed :  
Thus are they vndone and vtterly  
shamed.

auseres stre-  
pentes inter  
cauoros olo-  
res, relega-  
mus ad tres  
grues bac-  
chato Bro-  
mio initatos,  
pro foribus

Vinitoris, propter fluenta Thamisis. Ubi poti potati cum fasciculo  
inambusto ambustum futurum fasciculum pensitate, &c. hæc il.

*Ergo*

*Licet non enclitice,  
Tamen enthymematice,  
Notandum imprimis,  
Ut ne quid nimis.  
Tantum pro primo.*

Ouer this, for a more ample processe  
to be farther delated and contynued,  
and of euery true christenman lauda-  
bly to be employed, iustified, and con-  
stantly mainteyned; as touchyng the  
tetrycall theologisation of these demy  
diuines, and Stoicall studiantes, and fris-  
caioly yonkerkyns, moche better bayned  
than brayned, basked and baththed in  
their wylde burblyng and boyling blode,  
feruently reboyled with the infatuate  
flames of their rechelesse youthe and  
wytlesse wontonnesse, enbrased and en-  
terlased with a moche fantastickall frenesy  
of their insensate sensualityte, surmysed

Stoicam  
sectam Ze-  
non primus  
instituit.

Juvenes  
sanguinolenti,  
propter  
libidinem do-  
minandi et  
gloriam fa-  
mae, fre-  
quenter fieri  
solent sediti-  
osi. hæc  
Dias.

Perihermene-  
tica, i. latine  
interpretatio,  
&c.

Porphyrus  
floruit Athe-  
nis tempore  
Gordiani im-  
peratoris  
c.c.xlix. &c.

Analytica,  
libri priorum  
et posteriorum  
Arist.

Topica, i.  
liber totalis  
de totalibus  
locis, &c.

Presumere,  
est non au-  
dientia fa-  
cere, &c.

De idola-  
tria lege Hi-  
eronymum  
ad Iovenia-  
num, &c.

Idolatria  
dictio com-  
posita ex idolo  
(quod est  
simulacrum)  
et latría  
(quod est cul-  
tura) apud  
nos, &c.

De latría,  
hyperdulia,

dulia, quid sanctitas apostolica cum Constantino magno Constanti-  
nopoli ordinavit in concilio Latrensi, manifeste reperies et infra.

vnshurely in their perihermeniall princi-  
ples, to prate and to preche proudly and  
leudly, and loudly to lye; and yet they  
were but febly enformed in maister Por-  
phiris problemes, and haue waded but  
weakly in his thre maner of clerkly  
workes, analeticall, topicall, and logy-  
call: howbeit they were puffed so full  
of vaynglorious pompe and surcudant  
elacyon, that popholy and peuysshe pre-  
sumpcion prouoked them to publysshe  
and to preche to people imprudent pe-  
rilously, howe it was idolatry to offre to  
ymages of our blessed lady, or to pray  
and go on pylgrimages, or to make  
oblacions to any ymages of sayntes in  
churches or els where.

Agaynst whiche erronyous errours,  
odyous, orgulyous, and flyblowen  
opynions, &c.,

To the honour of our blessed lady,  
And her most blessed baby,  
I purpose for to reply

Agaynst this horryble heresy  
Of these yong heretikes, that stynke  
vnbrent,

Conuenio  
vos, O publi-  
ci injuria-  
tores sanctus  
et apostolicus  
ecclesie, &c.

Whom I nowe sommon and content,  
 That leudly haue their tyme spent,  
 In their study abhomynable,  
 Our glorious lady to disable,  
 And heynously on her to bable  
 With langage detestable ;  
 With your lypes polluted  
 Agaynst her grace disputed,  
 Whiche is the most clere christall  
 Of all pure clenness virgynall,  
 That our Sauyours bare,  
 Whiche vs redemed from care.

I saye, thou madde Marche hare,  
 I wondre howe ye dare  
 Open your ianglyng iāwes,  
 To preche in any clawes,  
 Lyke pratyng poppyng dawes,  
 Agaynst her excellence,  
 Agaynst her reuerence,  
 Agaynst her preemynence,  
 Agaynst her magnifycence,  
 That neuer dyde offence.

Ye heretykes recrayed,  
 Wotte ye what ye sayed  
 Of Mary, mother and mayed ?  
 With baudrie at her ye brayed ;  
 With baudy wordes vnmete  
 Your tonges were to flete ;  
 Your sermon was nat swete ;  
 Ye were nothyng discrete ;

O prodigiosa progenies, qualem de filio queritis habere misericordiam, cuius matrem inficiamini esse matrem misericordiae ?  
 Canit tamen universalis ecclesia, Salve, regina, mater misericordiae, &c.

Conuenio vos, O Ariani, Juliano apostata execrabiliores, &c.

Conuenio vos, O spurcissimi, O villissimi, O nequissimi obtrectatores matris Christi, &c.

Ye were in a dronken hete.

Convenio  
vos, O insen-  
sati litera-  
rum profes-  
sores, &c.

Lyke heretykes confettred,

Ye count yourselfe wele lettred :

Your lernyng is starke nought,

For shamefully ye haue wrought,

And to shame your selfe haue brought.

Convenio  
vos, O Jebu-  
sei, O Ju-  
dei. O Ca-  
naanei, O  
Pharisei,  
&c.

Bycause ye her mysnamed,

And wolde haue her defamed,

Your madnesse she attamed ;

For ye were worldly shamed,

At Poules crosse openly,

All men can testifye ;

Non vacat,  
O contemp-  
tores Mari-  
am, non va-  
cat, inquam,  
quod digna  
factis rece-  
pistis in dei-  
paris virgi-  
nis concep-  
tione, &c.  
hæc il.

There, lyke a sorte of sottes,

Ye were fayne to beare fagottes ;

At the feest of her concepcion

Ye suffred suche correction.

*Sive per æquivocum,*

*Sive per univocum,*

*Sive sic, sive nat so,*

Ye are brought to, Lo, lo, lo !

Convenio  
vos, O ma-  
lesani, vani,  
profani  
Christiani.

Se where the heretykes go,

Wytlesse wandring to and fro !

With, Te he, ta ha, bo ho, bo ho !

And suche wondringes many mo.

Helas, ye wrechcs, ye may be wo !

Ye may syng wele away,

And curse bothe nyght and day,

Whan ye were bredde and borne,

Convenio  
vos, O Hus-  
sani, &c.

And whan ye were preestes shorne,

Thus to be laughed to skorne,

Thus tattred and thus torne,  
 Thorowe your owne folly,  
 To be blowen with the flye  
 Of horryble heresy.  
 Fayne ye were to reny,  
 And mercy for to crye,  
 Or be brende by and by,  
 Confessyng howe ye dyde lye  
 In prechyng shamefully.

Your selfe thus ye discused

As clerkes vnassured,  
 With ignorance obscured :

Ye are vnhappely vred.

In your dialecticall

And principles silogisticall,

If ye to remembrance call

Howe *sylogisari*

*Non est ex particulari,*

*Neque negativis,*

*Recte concludere si vis,*

*Et cætera id genus,*

Ye coude nat *corde tenus,*

Nor answer *verbo tenus,*

Whan prelacy you opposed ;

Your hertes than were hosed,

Your relacions reposed ;

And yet ye supposed

*Respondere ad quantum,*

But ye were *confuse tantum,*

Surrendring your supposicions,

80

Conuenio  
 vos, O Lu-  
 theriani.

100

Neque  
 non, neque  
 legas.

Quoniam  
 ignorantibus  
 suppositio-  
 nes veritatis  
 110 propositio-  
 num non re-  
 lucent, &c.

For there ye myst you[r] quosshons.

Wolde God, for your owne ease,

That wyse Harpocrates

Had your mouthes stopped,

And your tonges cropped,

Whan ye logyke chopped,

And in the pulpete hopped,

And folysshly there fopped,

And porisshly forthe popped

Your sysmaticate sawes

Agaynst Goddes lawes,

And shewed your selfe dawes !

Ye argued argumentes,

As it were vpon the elenkes,

*De rebus apparentibus*

*Et non existentibus ;*

And ye wolde appere wyse,

But ye were folyshe nyse :

Yet be meanes of that vyse

Ye dyde prouoke and tyse,

Oftnar than ones or twyse,

Many a good man

And many a good woman,

By way of their deuocion

To helpe you to promocion,

Whose charite wele regarded

Can nat be vnrewarded.

I saye it for no sedicion,

But vnder pacient tuicyon,

It is halfe a supersticyon

Harpocrates digito labiis impresso aduocauit silentium fieri in laudis templo, &c.

Conuenio vos, O coxallites ranæ, &c.

Sunt præterea nonnulli hujus farinae, de quibus hic non est narrandi locus.

Conuenio vos, O Herodiani.

129

130

140

To gyue you exhibycion  
 To mainteyne with your skoles,  
 And to proue your selfe suche foles.

Some of you had ten pounce,  
 Therwith for to be founde  
 At the vnyuersyte,  
 Employed whiche myght haue be  
 Moche better other wayes.

150 Obscurus  
sarcasmus.

But, as the man sayes,  
 The blynde eteth many a flye:  
 What may be ment hereby,  
 Ye may soone make construction  
 With right lytell instruction;  
 For it is an auntyent brute,  
 Suche apple tre, suche frute.  
 What shulde I prosecute,  
 Or more of this to clatter?  
 Retourne we to our matter.

Ex fructi-  
bus eorum  
cognoscetis  
eos, &c.

Ye soored ouer hye  
 In the ierarchy  
 Of Iouenyans heresy,  
 Your names to magnifye,  
 Among the scabbed skyes  
 Of Wycliffes flesshe flyes;  
 Ye strynged so Luthers lute,  
 That ye dawns all in a sute  
 The heritykes ragged ray,  
 That brings you out of the way  
 Of holy churches lay;  
 Ye shayle *inter enigmata*

160 Sublimius  
aequo aucu-  
pium agunt,  
&c.

Conuenio  
vos, O Wich-  
liffistas.

170



And *inter paradigma*,  
Marked in your cradels  
To heare fagottes for babyes.

And yet some men say,  
Howe ye are this day,  
And be nowe as yll,  
And so ye wyll be styll,  
As ye were before.

What shulde I reckon more?

*Conuenio  
vos, (i) var-  
bri, emphat-  
ice, &c.*

Men haue you in suspicion  
Howe ye haue small contrycion  
(Of that ye haue mysawrought:  
For, if it were well sought,  
One of you there was  
That laughed whan he dyd pas  
With his fagot in procesayon;  
He counted it for no correction,  
But with scornfull affection  
Toke it for a sporte,  
His heresy to supporte;  
Whereat a thousande gased,  
As people halfe amased,  
And thought in hym smale grace  
His foly so to face.

189

200

*Conuenio  
vos, (i) dis-  
bollet dog-  
matice, &c.*

Some iuged in this case  
Your penance toke no place,  
Your penance was to lyght;  
And thought, if ye had right,  
Ye shulde take further payne  
To resorte agayne

200

To places where ye haue preched,  
 And your lollardy lernyng teched,  
 And there to make relacion  
 In open predycacion,  
 And knowlege your offence  
 Before open audyence,  
 Howe falsely ye had surmysed,  
 And deuyllysshely deuysed  
 The people to seduce,  
 And chase them thorowe the muse  
 Of your noughty counsell,  
 To hunt them into hell,  
 With blowyng out your hornes,  
 Full of mockyssh scornes,  
 With chatyng and rechatyng,  
 And your busy pratyng :  
 Of the gospell and the pystels  
 Ye pyke out many thystels,  
 And bremely with your bristels  
 Ye cobble and ye clout  
 Holy Scripture so about,  
 That people are in great dout  
 And feare leest they be out  
 Of all good Christen order.  
 Thus all thyng ye disorder  
 Thorowe out euery bord[e]r.

It had ben moche better  
 Ye had neuer lerned letter,  
 For your ignorance is gretter,  
 I make you fast and sure,

290 Sunt ple-  
 rique alii,  
 sed non  
 alieni, qui  
 tantundem  
 pene enun-  
 tiant, &c.

Convenio  
 vos, inale  
 280 docti legistæ,  
 &c.

Than all your lytterature.  
 Ye are but lydder *logici*,  
 But moche worse *isagogici*,  
 For ye haue enduced a secte  
 With heresy all infecte ;  
 Wherefore ye are well checte,  
 And by holy churche correcte,  
 And in maner as abiecte,  
 For euermore suspecte,  
 And banysshed in effect  
 From all honest company,  
 Bycause ye haue eaten a flye,  
 To your great vyllony,  
 That neuer more may dye.

Conuenio  
 vos, O hypo-  
 critas, &c.

Come forthe, ye popeholy,  
 Full of melancoly ;  
 Your madde ipocrisy,  
 And your idiosy,  
 And your vayne glorie,  
 Haue made you eate the flye,  
 Pufte full of heresy,  
 To preche it idolatry,  
 Who so dothe magnifye

Maledictio  
 Mariana de-  
 scendat su-  
 per capita  
 vestra, O  
 hæretici, cre-  
 tici, phrene-  
 tici, &c.

That glorious mayde Mary ;  
 That glorious mayde and mother,  
 So was there neuer another  
 But that princesse alone,  
 To whom we are bounde echone  
 The ymage of her grace  
 To reuerence in euery place.

240

240

240

I saye, ye braynlesse beestes,  
Why iangle you suche iestes,

Conuenio  
vos, O Ma-  
chomitani,  
&c.

In your diuynite  
Of Luthers affynite,  
To the people of lay fee,  
Raylyng in your rages  
To worshyppe none ymages,  
Nor do pylgrymages?  
I saye, ye deuyllyshe pages,  
Full of suche dottages,  
Count ye your selfe good clerkes,  
And snapper in suche werkes?

270

Saynt Gregorie and saynt Ambrose,

Conuenio  
vos, O dis-  
moniaci me-  
ridiani, &c.

Ye haue reed them, I suppose,  
Saynt Jerome and saynt Austen,

With other many holy men,

Saynt Thomas de Aquyno,

With other doctours many mo,

280

Whiche *de latría* do trete;

They saye howe *latría* is an honour grete,

Belongyng to the Deite:

To this ye nedes must agre.

But, I trowe, your selfe ye ouerse

What longeth to Christes humanyte.

If ye haue reed *de hyperdulia*,

Than ye knowe what betokeneth *dulia*:

Than shall ye fynde it fyrme and stable,

And to our faithe moche agreable,

290

To worshyppe ymages of sayntes.

Wherfore make ye no mo restrayntes,

Nota de  
latría, hy-  
perdulia, du-  
lia, quid pro  
sanctos anxii-  
tum est Con-  
stantinopoli  
ab ecclesia  
catholica et  
apostolica  
iterum in-

fringere ;  
quid hoc sibi  
vult, fascicu-  
lum consu-  
litie inflam-  
matum, &c.

O medici,  
mediam per-  
tundite ve-  
nam.

But mende your myndes that are mased ;  
Or els doutlesse ye shalbe blased,  
And be brent at a stake,  
If further busynesse that ye make.  
Therfore I vyse you to forsake  
Of heresy the deuyllysse scoles,  
And crye Godmercy, lyke frantyeke  
foles.

*Tantum pro secundo.*

*Peroratio ad nuper abjuratos quosdam  
hypotheticos hæreticos, &c.*

*Audite, viri Ismaelitæ, non dico Is-  
raelitæ ;*

*Audite, inquam, viri Madianitæ, As-  
calonitæ ;*

*Ammonitæ, Gabaonitæ, audite verba  
quæ loquar.*

*Opus evangelii est cibus perfectorum ;  
Sed quia non estis de genere bonorum,  
Qui caterisatis<sup>1</sup> categorias cacodæmo-  
niorum,*

*Ergo*

*Et reliqua vestra problemata, schemata,  
Dilemmata, sinto anathemata !  
Ineluctabile argumentum est.*

<sup>1</sup> caterisatis] Qy. "catarrhizatis?"

A confutation responsyue, or an in-  
euytably prepensed answer to all way-  
warde or frowarde altercacyons that can  
or may be made or objected agaynst  
Skelton laureate, deuysed of this Reply-  
cacyon, &c.

Why fall ye at debate  
With Skelton laureate,  
Reputyng hym vnable  
To gainsay replycable  
Opinyons detestable  
Of heresy execrable?

300

Ye saye that poetry  
Maye nat flye so hye  
In theology,  
Nor analogy,  
Nor philology,  
Nor philosophy,  
To answere or reply  
Agaynst suche heresy.

Tota erras  
via, si doc-  
tos poetas  
(illis autem  
non desunt  
charismata)  
arguis de in-  
scitia. h. il.

310

Wherfore by and by  
Nowe consequently  
I call to this rekenyng  
Dauyd, that royall kyng,  
Whom Hieronymus,  
That doctour glorious,  
Dothe bothe write and call  
Poete of poetes all,  
And prophete princypall.

David rex  
et propheta  
per diuum  
Hierony-  
mum matri-  
culatur in  
nobili catalo-  
go poetarum  
lyricorum, ut  
patet infra,  
&c. hæc il.

320

Vos igitur  
omnes irri-  
sore con-  
temptores-  
que poeta-  
rum erubes-  
cite cum ig-  
nominiosa  
vrecundia,  
exitiosaque  
confusio ope-  
riat facies  
vestras. hæc  
il.

This may nat be remorded,  
For it is wele recorded  
In his pystell *ad Paulinum*,  
*Presbyterum divinum*,  
Where worde for worde ye may  
Rede what Jerome there dothe say.

*David, inquit, Simonides noster, Pin-  
darus, et Alcæus, Flaccus quoque, Ca-  
tullus, atque Serenus, Christum lyra  
personat, et in decachordo psalterio  
ab inferis excitat resurgentem. Hæc  
Hier.*

*The Englysshe.*

Kyng Daud the prophete, of prophetes  
principall,  
Of poetes chefe poete, saint Jerome  
dothe wright, 280  
Resembled to Symonides, that poete  
lyricall  
Among the Grekes most relucen of  
lyght,  
In that faculte whiche shyned as Phe-  
bus bright;  
Lyke to Pyndarus in glorious poetry,  
Lyke vnto Alcheus, he dothe hym mag-  
nify.

Flaccus nor Catullus with hym may nat  
 compare,  
 Nor solempne Serenus, for all his  
 armony  
 In metricall muses, his harpyng we may  
 spare ;  
 For Daud, our poete, harped so me-  
 loudiously  
 Of our Sauyour Christ in his deca-  
 corde psautry, 310  
 That at his resurrection he harped out  
 of hell  
 Olde patriarkes and prophetes in heuen  
 with him to dwell.

Returne we to our former processe.

Than, if this noble kyng  
 Thus can harpe and syng  
 With his harpe of prophecy  
 And spyrituall poetry,  
 As saynt Jerome saythe,  
 To whom we must gyue faythe,  
 Warblyng with his strynges  
 Of suche theologicall thynges,  
 Why haue ye than disdayne  
 At poetes, and complayne  
 Howe poetes do but fayne ?  
 Ye do moche great outrage,  
 For to disparage  
 And to discourage

320  
 Fama ma-  
 tricula, i.  
 scripta in  
 quadam  
 chartula im-  
 mortalitatis  
 et schedula  
 gratie in-  
 marcescibi-  
 lis, &c. h. ll.



The fame matryculate  
Of poetes laureate.

For if ye sadly loke,  
And wesely rede the Boke  
Of Good Aduertysement,  
With me ye must consent  
And infallibly agre  
Of necessitye,  
Howe there is a spyrituall,  
And a mysteriall,  
And a mysticall

Energia  
Græce, La-  
tine efficax  
operatio, in-  
ternoque  
quodam spir-  
itus impulsu  
inopinabili-  
ter originata,  
&c.

Effecte energiall,  
As Grekes do it call,  
Of suche an industry,  
And suche a pregnancy,  
Of heuenly inspyracion  
In laureate creacyon,  
Of poetes commendacion,

Est deus  
in nobis;  
agitante ca-  
leccimus illo.  
Sedibus  
ætheriis spi-  
ritus iste ve-  
nit. h. Ovi.  
Dona Dei,  
carmen niti-  
dum, facun-  
dia præstans,  
Mittitur ex  
astris, a su-  
perieque da-  
tur. hæc  
Bapt. Man.

That of diuyn myseracion  
God maketh his habytacion  
In poetes whiche excelles,  
And soiourns with them and dwelles.

Est deus  
in nobis;  
agitante ca-  
leccimus illo.  
Sedibus  
ætheriis spi-  
ritus iste ve-  
nit. h. Ovi.  
Dona Dei,  
carmen niti-  
dum, facun-  
dia præstans,  
Mittitur ex  
astris, a su-  
perieque da-  
tur. hæc  
Bapt. Man.

By whose inflammacion  
Of spyrituall instygacion  
And diuyn inspyracion,  
We are kyndled in suche facyon  
With hete of the Holy Gost,  
Which is God of myghtes most,  
That he our penne dothe lede,  
And maketh in vs suche spede,

Tarda ne-  
scit molimi-

That forthwith we must nede  
 With penne and ynke procede,  
 Somtyme for affection,  
 Somtyme for sadde dyrection,  
 Somtyme for correction,  
 Somtyme vnder protection  
 Of pacient sufferance,  
 With sobre cyrcumstance,  
 Our myndes to auauunce  
 To no mannes anoyance;  
 Therfore no greuance,  
 I pray you, for to take,  
 In this that I do make  
 Agaynst these frenetykes,  
 Agaynst these lunatykes,  
 Agaynst these sysmatykes,  
 Agaynst these heretykes,  
 Nowe of late abiured,  
 Most vnhappely vred:  
 For be ye wele assured,  
 That frency nor ielousy  
 Nor heresy wyll neuer dye.

na Spiritus  
 Sancti gra-  
 tia. hæc Hiero-  
 nym.

380

Lingua  
 mea calamus  
 scribæ velo-  
 citer scriben-  
 tis. h. psal.

400

*Dixi*

*iniquis, Nolite inique agere; et delin-*  
*quentibus, Nolite exaltare cornu.*

Hæc psal-  
 mista.

*Tantum pro tertio.*

*De raritate poetarum, deque gymnoso-*  
*phistarum, philosophorum, theologo-*

*rum, cæterorumque eruditorum infinita numerositate, Skel. L. epitoma.*

Quæ sunt  
inter socia-  
bus<sup>1</sup> sicut  
Achates. h.  
Gag. &c.

*Sunt infiniti, sunt innumerique sophistæ,*

*Sunt infiniti, sunt innumerique logistæ,*

*Innumeri sunt philosophi, sunt theologique,*

*Sunt infiniti doctores, suntque magistri*

*Innumeri; sed sunt pauci rarique poetæ.*

*Hinc omne est rarum carum: reor ergo  
poetas*

*Ante alios omnes divino flamine flatos.*

*Sic Plato divinat, divinat sicque So-  
crates;*

Lege Val-  
lerium Max-  
imum de in-  
signi venera-  
tione poeta-  
rum.

*Sic magnus Macedo, sic Cæsar, maxi-  
mus heros*

*Romanus, celebres semper coluere poe-  
ta[s].*

Thus endeth the Replicacyon of  
Skel. L. &c.

<sup>1</sup> *sociabus*] Qy. "sociatos?"

END OF VOL. I.



11



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taken from the Building**

SEP 19 1951

1



2



